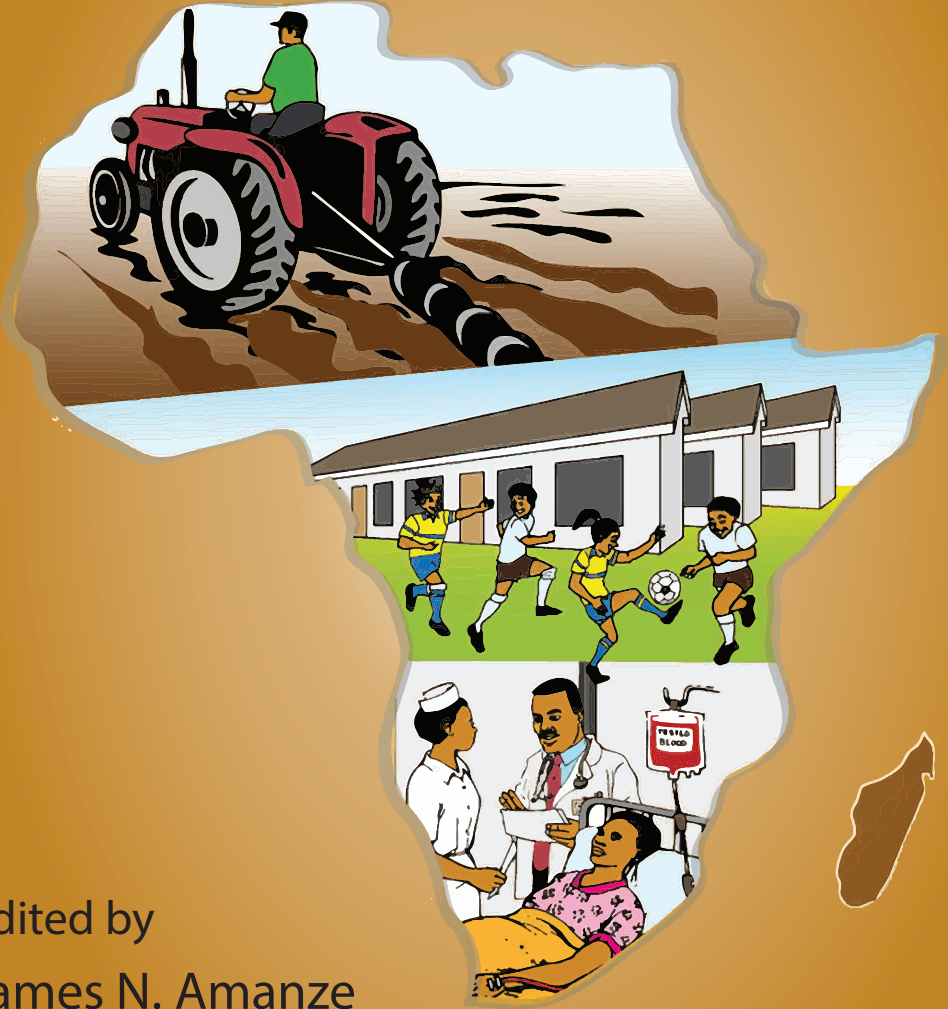


Religion & Development in Southern and Central Africa



Edited by
James N. Amanze
Maake Masango
Ezra Chitando
Lilian Siwila



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**Religion and Development
in Southern and Central Africa
Vol. II**

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Introduction

This second volume of *Religion and Development in Southern and Central Africa*, is a result of a joint conference under the theme "Religion, Citizenship and Development – Southern African Perspectives", which was held from 18th-22nd July 2017 at the University of Zimbabwe, Harare. It was jointly organized by the Association of Theological Institutions in Southern and Central Africa (ATISCA), All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Bread for the World (BfdW), Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (CIRCLE) and Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC). It was hosted by the Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy at the University of Zimbabwe. Apart from ATISCA members, the conference was also attended by the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (CIRCLE) in large numbers. The theme of the conference was skillfully crafted and adopted in order to underline the importance and significance of religion in the socio-economic development of people in the world generally and in Southern and Central Africa in particular.

Like volume 1, the thematic focus of volume 2 is on development with regard to the future of the whole people in the Southern Africa region. The main philosophy of the theme is that theologically, it is the mission of the Church and theologians to take active part in the socio-economic transformation of human beings so that they may become their best and reflect more concretely the image and likeness of God free from the oppressive powers of poverty, ignorance, disease, and alienation from one another as a result of social, political, economic and religious conflicts. The Church and theologians have the theological and prophetic task to incarnate in their agenda the socio-economic programmes of their people. This is the only way in which the Church and theologians will remain relevant to the people, whom they have been called to serve. Consequently, churches and theologians need to develop an integral theology of development which is essentially an extension of the theology of creation, incarnation, redemption and sanctification. Generally speaking, the theology of development should be the continuation of the three-fold mission of God the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier.

The authors of this book have contributed significantly to the debate that socio-economic development understood as transformation should be aimed at promoting and enhancing the dignity and full participation of all the people of God and that such undertaking should be supported and given shape by the work of the Church and theologians since it is part of their divine mandate. It is the duty of the Church and theologians to devote part of their ministry ministering spiritually and physically to the needs of the world in the fields of health care, education, economic growth and political emancipation.

It is important to note that while volume one consists of papers which directly discuss religion and development in one form or another, the second volume contains papers that discuss religion and other pertinent issues related to development such as citizenship and development, migration and development, disability and development, Pentecostal Churches and development and religion and society. All in all, despite a divergence of sub-themes in volume two, all of them point to issues to do with the role of religion in development in Southern and Central Africa today. The contributors of the chapters contained in volume two have been listed in volume one. It is hoped that the information contained herein will go a long way to provide significant and relevant knowledge that will assist our people to participate fully and meaningfully in the development of their respective communities as we move from capital based to knowledge-based economies.

Professor James N. Amanze

ATISCA SECRETARIAT

26th March 2019

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Chapter 1

The Concept of Citizenship vis-à-vis Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe: A Philosophical Enquiry

Joyline Gwara, Chipso M. Hatendi and Kudzi Biri

Introduction

There are several interpretations and meanings that are attached to the concept of citizenship. These interpretations and meanings vary in different cultures and at different times. In this regard, citizenship becomes a contested and sensitive concept. However, though the concept has various meanings in different contexts, it is our conviction that the African understanding of the concept from a communitarian perspective is helpful in advancing developmental goals in Zimbabwe. Thus, the theoretical framework informing this research is the communitarian theory of citizenship. It is argued in this chapter that for the Sustainable Development Goals to be met, there is need for equality, togetherness, mutual understanding, and a sense of belonging. These values are embedded in the African concept of community, where an individual's existence depends on the existence of others. The individual feels obliged to contribute to the welfare of his or her community to which one is a member. The chapter is structured as follows: first it looks at the concept of citizenship and its historical background. It then examines the theories advanced in a bid to understand citizenship and the concept of sustainable development, noting its major principles. Finally, it focuses on the African concept of communitarian citizenship and how it aids sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

The Concept of Citizenship

John Pocock noted that the roots of the concept of citizenship are in the Greek *polis* and the Roman *res publica*¹. The classical concept of citizenship is found in the works of Aristotle who defined a citizen as an individual who is born of parents who are citizens and who holds an office or is in some way participating in the deliberative or judicial administration of the state.² For Aristotle, “there are different kinds of citizens; and he is a citizen in the fullest sense who shares in the honours of the state.”³ Aristotle argued:

It must be admitted that we cannot consider all those to be citizens who are necessary to the existence of the state; for example, children are not citizens equally with grown-up men, who are citizens absolutely, but children, not being grown up, are only citizens on a certain assumption. In ancient times, and among some nations, the artisan class were slaves or foreigners, and therefore the majority of them are so now. The best form of state will not admit them to citizenship; but if they are admitted, then our definition of the excellence of a citizen will not apply to every citizen, nor to every free man as such, but only to those who are freed from necessary services. The necessary people are either slaves who minister to the wants of individuals, or mechanics and labourers who are the servants of the community.⁴

William Ross noted that Aristotle’s conception of a citizen is widely different from the modern conception because it is not representative, but it is primarily government that he has in view.⁵ Furthermore, his citizen-

¹ John G.A. Pocock, "The Ideal of Citizenship since Classical Times," in R. Beiner (ed), *Theorizing Citizenship*, SUNY Press, 1992, p. 35.

² Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III, 1275b23-1275b33:2024.

³ Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III, 1278a35-1278a39:2028.

⁴ Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III, 1277b34-1278a14:2027.

⁵ William D. Ross (ed), *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937, p. 247.

ship is not content to have a say in the choosing of the rulers; every citizen is actually to rule in turn, and not merely in the sense of being a member of the executive who is assigned the comparatively small function of supplementing the laws when they are inadequate owing to their generality. It is owing to this lofty conception of a citizen's duties that he so closely narrows down the citizen body.⁶ In tandem with Ross, it can be argued that Aristotle's conception of citizenship is no longer valid in today's world since he failed to see the possibilities of representative government. It can be noted that the modern concept of citizenship is constructed on Rousseau's notion of self-determination, which is represented by a contract between the people (free and equal) and the government. Throughout, citizenship meant more than political membership but possession of certain civic rights. It gained a pluralist content in addition to membership in a democratic homogenous community. According to Leca, modern citizenship consists of three features: (1) a judicial status which confers rights and obligations vis-à-vis a political collectivity; (2) a group of social roles for making choices in the political arena (political competence); (3) an ensemble of moral qualities required for the character of the 'good' citizen.⁷ In the contemporary world the minimum requirement for citizenship is the power to vote for the representatives of the people who do the actual ruling in a democracy.

In a bid to understand what citizenship entails, Ahluwalia submitted that there is need to distinguish between a citizen and a subject.⁸ He noted that, in Western political thought, subjects are individuals who have consented to a sovereign rule and who, by according that consent, have certain rights and obligations. Furthermore, Etienne Balibar, argued that,

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ J. Leca, "Questions on Citizenship," in C. Mouffe, *Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community*, London: Verso, 1992, pp. 17f.

⁸ P. Ahluwalia, *Politics and Post-Colonial Theory: African Reflections*, London: Routledge, 2001, p. 105.

the citizen comes after the subject. The citizen, he notes, “is that ‘non-subject’ who comes after the subject, and whose constitution and recognition put an end (in principle) to the subjection of the subject.”⁹ For Balibar, citizenship is a kind of freedom which is rooted in ‘natural rights.’ For Pamela Johnson Conover, citizen identities are the defining character of communities; such identities can be socially cohesive.¹⁰ She further notes that when these identities are found to be lacking, legitimacy itself becomes problematic.

According to Conover, there are three components to citizenship and of these three the third one is of paramount importance to this chapter. The first is membership in a political community signified by some legal notion. Although in the modern world citizenship is embedded strongly in the nation-state, individuals are also members of other political communities, and “thus citizens experience multiple levels of citizenship nested within each other.”¹¹ It is important to recognize that, despite the association of nation-states with citizenship, it is at the local level and in the local contexts that people experience being and express themselves as citizens. The second component is a sense of citizenship. This sense is based on the “affective significance that people give their membership in a particular political community.”¹² Finally there is the practice of citizenship, which entails both political participation as well as civic activity. In this regard, a number of differing conceptions of citizenship have developed, depending upon perspective. Conover argues that:

From a liberal perspective, to be a citizen is to be an individual ‘bearer of right.’ That universal status is what we have in common. In contrast,

⁹ Etienne Balibar, “Europe: Vanishing Mediator,” *Constellations*, 10(3), 2003, pp. 38-39.

¹⁰ Pamela Johnson Conover, “Citizen Identities and Conceptions of the Self,” *Journal of Political Philosophy*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1995, pp. 133–165.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 135.

¹² *Ibid*, p. 134.

from a communitarian perspective, to be a citizen is to be a member of a particular community. That shared life is what we have in common. And different still, from a cultural pluralist perspective, to be a citizen would mean to be a member of a particular social group, one of many in the political community ... The difference in these conceptions is considerable as are their consequences for the ontological nature of the civic bond.¹³

Having noted from Conover's argument that different understandings of the concept of citizenship developed from different perspectives, it is of paramount importance now to give a critical analysis of three theories of citizenship. These are the liberal theory, the communitarian theory (which informs this chapter) and the republican theory.

Theories of Citizenship

At the core of the concept of citizenship, both in the theoretical and actual sense, is an attempt to grapple with the question of belonging and membership. According to Delanty, citizenship is about membership of a political community.¹⁴ He argues that it involves relationships between rights, duties, participation and identity; these are the core features of citizenship. It is evident in the different theories that they prioritize different elements of Delanty's core features of citizenship. For the liberal conceptions of citizenship, it is rights that are pre-eminent; for communitarian theories of citizenship, duties and identity are asserted; and for the republican theory of citizenship, participation is stressed. There is need now to explore these theories in detail.

¹³ P.J. Conover, "Citizen Identities and Conceptions of the Self," *Journal of Political Philosophy*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1995, pp. 139-140.

¹⁴ G. Delanty, *Citizenship in a Global Age: Society, Politics*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000, p. 9.

Liberal Citizenship

Liberalism is not an abstract, static position, but it is an evolving tradition which arose in different historical and political contexts of European history. This tradition took centre stage in the 19th century. It defended the freedom of individuals in relation to growing social and state power, seeking their protection through individual rights and limits on government. Liberal citizenship seeks to foster such membership through the granting of equal rights to all. In other words, liberal citizenship has an egalitarian impulse at its heart. Arguments associated with liberal citizenship can be traced back to the works of such acclaimed philosophers as John Locke. Also, such philosophers as Benjamin Constant, Alexis de Tocqueville, and John Stuart Mill reacted to the collectivist implications of political and philosophical utilitarianism and nationalism so that a second strand of liberalism focusing on individual autonomy was developed. Joseph Raz noted that liberalism addresses the political conflict arising from individuals' different interests and divergent moral perspectives by creating a political authority.¹⁵ Because government itself may become oppressive, it must be constrained. This spells out as requiring that citizens have an equal civil status, strong legal rights, including freedom of speech and conscience, and that there are constitutional limitations on any form of government. However, on the one hand, this freedom can be interpreted negatively as non-interference, and on the other hand, it can be interpreted in a more positive way as autonomy. Liberals' focus is on protecting individual rights.

Also, another characteristic of the liberal trend apart from upholding freedom, also developed an egalitarian strand, which means a degree of social and economic equality and, accordingly, of state led redistribution. This is evidenced in the development of the political theory of John Rawls. Rawls developed two basic principles, that is, equal freedom and the limiting of inequalities to those which may benefit the least well-off.

¹⁵ J. Raz, *The Morality of Freedom*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, p. 30.

For T. Mashall, citizenship provides membership of the community through the establishment of equal rights which give each individual an equal chance to pursue their own, private, goals.¹⁶ It aims at equality, permitting, even encouraging, a private (market) inequality. However, though the liberal ideas triumphed, they faced serious criticism both conceptually and practically. For instance, critics note that it is because its central ideal, that individuals are entitled to equal treatment by right, has become engraved in western political culture (and beyond) that many are critical of it; critical that the priority it places on the private sphere inhibits delivery on the egalitarian promise inherent within. This led Stephen Macedo to succinctly argue, “the benefits of private citizenship are not to be sneered at: they place certain basic human goods (security, prosperity and freedom) within the grasp of nearly all, and that is nothing less than a fantastic human achievement.”¹⁷ Furthermore, liberalism has some individualistic assumptions as it fails to focus on shared goods, and also fails to identify certain kinds of oppression, or to motivate citizens to act in ways that would sustain liberal institutions.

Republican Citizenship

Republicanism is suspicious towards the privatism of liberal citizenship, as liberalism gives too much concern to privacy and individual rights and too little to fostering public virtues that lead people to do their duties as citizens.¹⁸ On the other hand, for republicanism, citizenship is created through the process of participation in public affairs. It takes into consideration the fact that it is in these encounters that individuals go beyond the concerns of their private life, the private world of their family and

¹⁶ T.H. Mashall, *Citizenship and Social Class*, London: Pluto Press, 1991.

¹⁷ S. Macedo, *Liberal Virtues: Citizenship, Virtues, and Community in Liberal Constitutionalism*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990, p. 39.

¹⁸ R. Dagger, *Civic Virtues. Rights, Citizenship, and Republican Liberalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 146.

friends, and consider the public good. Furthermore, republican citizenship seeks to foster a positive freedom, to create conditions where individuals promote freedom, in the sense of self-government, and membership, because when we participate in public life we encounter and interact with other members of the community. Key for the republican theory of citizenship is participation, which is the means by which both freedom and membership are created and sustained. Republican citizenship has its roots in ancient Greek and Roman societies. In its classical republican form, it comes from Cicero, through Machiavelli. These philosophers celebrated the active, participatory citizen, and supported a system of government marked by self-government, the rule of law and the separation of powers. These models of thinking were rediscovered later in the writings of de Tocqueville (1835-1840), Rousseau (1712-1778), Jefferson (1743-1826) and others.

However, though it seems like a better alternative to liberal citizenship, republicanism does not go unchallenged. Some critics argue that the republican conception of citizenship is not realistic, because modern people derive their sense of worth and identity primarily from their interactions in the private sphere and not in the public sphere. Further to this, the republican emphasis on the public and common good may tend to marginalize or ignore those who are different. Further criticisms point to the fact that, historically and traditionally, the civic public has been made up of able-bodied white men, and the public or common good is also frequently constructed in such terms. The requirement that we adopt the position of the common good thus means that some groups, for instance, women, ethnic and religious minorities have to abandon or suppress their identity, their difference.

Communitarian Citizenship

Communitarian citizenship seeks to re-emphasize the role and importance of the community. This is built on the communitarian ethos as advanced by Western scholars such as Michael Sandel. However,

there are also African scholars such as Placide Tempels, John Mbiti, Ifeanyi Menkiti and Kwame Gyekye who are well known for advancing the communitarian ethos. Placide Tempels argues that the concept of separate beings, which find themselves side by side, entirely independent of one another, is foreign to Bantu thought.¹⁹ Thus, Placide Tempels saw the created beings as preserving a bond with one another, an intimate ontological relationship. He further saw the Bantu as having an interaction of being with being, that is, of force with force.²⁰ In the created force, Tempels argues that the Bantu see a causal action emanating from that nature of the created force and influencing other forces.²¹ Like Tempels, Mbiti argues that in traditional life the individual does not and cannot exist alone. He owes his existence to other people, including those of the past generations and his contemporaries.²² For Mbiti, the individual is part of the whole. The role of the community is to make, create or produce the individual who depends on the corporate group. Elsewhere Mbiti also notes that the African concept of family and community includes the unborn members who are still in the loins of the living. For him, they are the buds of hope and expectation, and each family makes sure that its own existence is not extinguished.²³

Communitarianism is also well espoused in the works of Menkiti and Gyekye. These two scholars advance what is known in African philosophy as radical and moderate communitarianism respectively. The communitarian ethos understands human beings as enmeshed in social

¹⁹ Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, Paris: Presence Africaine, 1959, p. 28.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, London: Heinemann, 1969, p. 108.

²³ Ibid.

relations.²⁴ However, some disparities may be noted between Menkiti and Gyekye. Whilst Menkiti emphasizes that communal interests come prior to individual interests, Gyekye is of the contrary view and believes that it is individual interests that take precedence over communal interests.²⁵ Worth noting is the fact that the underlying principle for both scholars is the view that it is the community that defines who a person is.

Ikuenobe argues that Menkiti draws the conclusion that the needs, reality, and existence of the community is logically prior to those of the individual.²⁶ In fact, the interests and needs of the individual derive from those of the community.²⁷ In this regard, Africans do not think of themselves as discrete individuals, but rather understand themselves as part of a community. Like his predecessors, Gyekye argues that communitarianism sees the human person as (intrinsically) a communal being, embedded in a context of social relationships and interdependence, never as an isolated, atomic individual.²⁸ He further argues that communitarianism also sees the community not as a mere association of individual persons whose interests and ends are contingently congruent, but as a group of persons linked by interpersonal bonds, biological or non-biological, who consider themselves primarily as members of the group and who have common interests, goals and values.²⁹ For him, the fact

²⁴ Kwame Gyekwe, *Traditions and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

²⁵ http://homepage.westmont.edu/hoeckley/readings/symposium/pdf/201_300/206.pdf.

²⁶ Polycarp Ikuenobe, *Philosophical Perspectives on Communalism and Morality in African Traditions*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006, p. 54.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ K. Wiredu and K. Gyekye, *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies*, Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992, p. 104.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

that a person is born into a human society must suggest a conception of the person as communitarian by nature.

Drawing from the above understanding of communitarianism, we seek to unravel what citizenship means in the African context. Communitarian citizenship, therefore, emphasizes the obligation of citizenship and sees membership as a pre-requisite for rights. In other words, it re-iterates the obligations that the individual owes to the community. The argument of the communitarians is that the community pre-exists. Where there is no community or common identification, individuals will not have an obligation to uphold the responsibilities which citizenship incurs. Thus, developing membership and belonging is less a case of making the community through citizenship rights but rather making citizenship reflect the community. Communitarians believe that citizenship is intrinsically related to social and cultural contexts, be it in the public or in the private sphere. This chapter capitalizes on the communitarian views of citizenship as it advances the argument that citizenship is key to the sustainable development of Zimbabwe in its social, political and economic aspects. Now we briefly examine what sustainable development entails.

Sustainable Development

There is no single definition for sustainable development. The concept has been defined differently by various disciplines. According to the World Commission on Environment and Development, sustainable development is understood as development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.³⁰ Turner notes that, “in principle, such an optimal (sustainable) policy would seek to maintain an acceptable rate of growth in per-capita real incomes without depleting the national capital asset

³⁰ World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987.

stock or the natural environmental asset stock.”³¹ Conway argues that sustainable development can be understood as “the net productivity of biomass (positive mass balance per unit area per unit time) maintained over decades to centuries.”³² However, there are three aspects of sustainable development. These are economic, environmental and social aspects.

Economically, a sustainable system must be able to produce goods and services on a continuous basis, to maintain manageable levels of government and external debt, and to avoid extreme sectoral imbalances which damage agricultural or industrial production.³³ Environmentally, a sustainable system must maintain a stable resource base, avoiding over-exploitation of renewable resource systems or environmental sink functions, and depleting non-renewable resources only to the extent that investment is made in adequate substitutes.³⁴ This includes maintenance of biodiversity, atmospheric stability, and other ecosystem functions not ordinarily classed as economic resources. A socially sustainable system must achieve distributional equity, adequate provision of social services including health and education, gender equity, and political accountability and participation.³⁵ As this chapter focuses more on how citizenship as a concept can aid sustainable development in Zimbabwe, the social aspect of sustainable development is of paramount importance. To achieve ‘human development’ there is need to emphasize issues that cater for basic needs and equity which are grounded in the history of economic

³¹ John C. Turner, "Comments on Doise's Individual and Social Identities in Intergroup Relations," *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18(2), 1988, pp. 113-116.

³² Gordon R. Conway, "The Properties of Agroecosystems," *Agricultural Systems* 24, no. 2, 1987, pp. 95-117.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

theory. In this regard, Sudhir Anand and Amartya Sen point out that concerns for dimensions of economic development start with the earliest economic theorists, and they contrast the human development approach to the wealth maximization approach which has dominated modern economics:

There is no foundational departure in making economic analysis and policy take extensive note of the demands of human development. This approach reclaims an existing heritage, rather than importing or implanting a new diversion. The interest in human development has had to compete with other priorities and pursuits within the body of mainstream economics. The preoccupation with commodity production, opulence, and financial success can also be traced in economics through several centuries. Indeed, the dominant contemporary tradition of focusing on such variables as per capita gross national product (GNP) or national wealth is a continuation – perhaps even an intensification – of the old opulence-oriented approach.³⁶

In this chapter our argument is that development ought not to be understood as GNP or GDP, but as ‘human development’ which encompasses democratic governance, and reduction of gender inequity and poverty. The question that we ask is: how then can citizenship be an important factor in achieving sustainable development in Zimbabwe?

Communitarian Citizenship and Sustainable Development

In this chapter we argue that communitarian citizenship promotes equity, a sense of belonging and participation, which are key features in the social aspect of sustainable development. Community belonging is a critical virtue and defines who we are at every stage of our lives. Member

³⁶ Sudhir Anand and Amartya Sen, “Sustainable Human Development: Concepts and Priorities,” UNDP Human Development Report Office, 1994, Occasional Papers, available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2294664>.

participation is of paramount importance in the advancement of developmental goals as we believe that members of communities are responsible for either holding society back or moving it forward. Of paramount importance in community life are conversations. As indicated by Lillis, community development could be understood as intricate networks of purposeful conversations about the issues that matter most to people.³⁷ In other words, communitarian citizenship necessitates conversations in which people define who they are, what they want and how others think. It is the belief of this chapter that sustainable development can only be achieved, be it by public agency or community, through conversations. Further, we note that, for Zimbabwe to develop there is need to involve the people and work towards improving social relations in the country. An improvement of social relations can bolster the voluntary capacity of citizens and communities working together. Participation of citizens implies that citizens are active in decision-making and hence in sustainable development. Involving citizens in decision-making enhances democratic development, that is, people talking, working and deliberating together, who agree on approaches to solving social issues that are important to them. Sustainable development therefore involves, in many senses, citizenship understood in the broadest sense of communitarianism, that is, belonging to a community founded on equality, solidarity and freedom or voluntary participation.

Conclusion

There is an important link between citizenship and sustainable development. The chapter has traced the historical background to the concept of citizenship. However, of the three theories, it is the communitarian

³⁷ S. Lillis, "Learning from the Seminar," in Séamus Lillis (ed), *Engagement-Transforming Learning Third Level and Community – Seminar Report*, Cross Border Centre for Community Development: Dundalk Institute of Technology, 2006.

theory which seems more relevant to the Zimbabwean context, since socio-economic and political developments are informed more by the African indigenous communitarian ethos. the values embedded in the African concept of communitarianism such as those of belonging, mutual understanding, equality and togetherness promote human relations which in turn are relevant for sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 2

Citizenship Education: Some Reflections on Zimbabwe's New Curriculum 2015-2022

Hardy Chitate

Introduction

Through a review of relevant literary sources, this chapter makes out a case for the full inclusion of Citizenship Education and for the restoration of History to its pedestal position within Zimbabwe's national school curriculum. This view is reached after a careful examination of the roles that those subjects can perform in the creation of a critically minded future Zimbabwean citizenry that has the capacity to serve actively in the body politic.

Following consultations held between 1998 and 1999 by the Zimbabwe Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CEIT) with various groups of people within and without the country, 'Citizenship (Civic) Education' was recommended unreservedly as a discrete school curricular subject. Most worryingly, however, this has not happened, even to this day. In fact, the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) has made only scant reference to Citizenship Education in its competence-based *Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-20*. This new curriculum-design documentation was rolled out only recently. It makes no mention of Citizenship Education, as a compulsory subject for all pupils at both the primary and secondary school levels, save for cursory treatment of its content as a 'cross-curricular requirement.' Instead, the Ministry has created new 'learning areas' that include 'Heritage and Life-skills Orientation Programme (LOP)-Social Studies.' Regrettably, the former

appears to have relegated literary and academic History to a mere optional programme of study. Yet the subject is arguably the single most important curricular element, at the cutting edge of the process of developing a 'mode of thought'¹ or 'an historical dimension'² that enables 'citizenship to be best cultivated.'³ Given that 'Democratic Citizenship Education' is back in vogue, as part of a powerful international discourse, its form, purpose and status, most particularly in the Zimbabwean secondary school curriculum, need to be re-considered, as a matter of great urgency.

Content and Perspectives

This chapter takes part in the sustained debate about the issues at stake. It does so with a view to hatching out the word-concept of 'citizenship.' This should provide an engaging, conceptual framework within which to examine several key aspects that are related to the development of the Citizenship Education curriculum in the post-1980 independent Zimbabwe. The present academic discourse is premised on the view that the development of civic intelligence, among Zimbabwean adolescents, should not be left to pure chance. Rather, it should be part of a deliberate strategy of curriculum development and research. For such mental ability has become indispensable for coping with the Third Millennium demands of 'deliberative democracy.'

¹ R.V. Daniels, *Studying History: How and Why*, 2nd Edition, Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1972.

² P. Lee and D. Shemilt, "New Alchemy or Fatal Attraction? History and Citizenship in Teaching History," *The Historical Association*, 2007.

³ Cuban cited by F.D. Drake and L.R. Nelson, *Engagement in Teaching History: Theory and Practice for Middle and Secondary Teachers*, Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall, 2005.

Conceptual Framework

Citizenship Education has had an inauspicious history. Debates about it have often produced more heat than light. The result has been a lack of meaningful strategies to implement its spellings out successfully in the classroom.⁴ The seemingly less impeccable pedigree of Citizenship Education has stemmed mainly from the long-drawn out controversy over its place and purpose in the school curriculum. This has involved academics pitting their wits against politicians. "Citizenship has provoked debate for centuries ... because, like history itself, it is bound up with issues concerning national identity ... ethnicity ... and state formation."⁵

Among the very many definitions that have been proffered for the concept of citizenship is that it is "the set of relationships that prevail between an individual and state or nation. It is part of his [or her] existence in a democratic state which includes rights, responsibilities and duties."⁶ Precisely because of the dissonance of opinions on the nature of those 'relationships,' competing models of citizenship have emerged.

There are four main schools of thought on citizenship, namely, the 'Civic Republican,' 'Liberal,' 'Communitarian' and 'Community-based' models. The 'Civic Republican' conceptual paradigm of citizenship is "Old Right" wing in origin. Consequently, it is extremely conservative and parochial. In this model, "the well-being of the state is paramount, and the role of the individual is to look at ways they can serve the

⁴ I. Davies, "Citizenship and the Teaching and Learning of History," in J. Arthur and R. Phillips (eds), *Issues in History Teaching*, London: Routledge, 2011.

⁵ Heater, Miller, Oommen and Kennedy cited by R. Phillips, "Reflective Teaching of History," *Continuum Studies in Reflective Practice and Theory*, 11-18, London: Continuum, 2002, p. 143.

⁶ C.T. Nziramasanga, Zimbabwe Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training, Harare: Government Printers, 1999, p. 349.

community.”⁷ Thus, the citizen is a helpless and passive victim of state political manipulation, as he or she is expected to be more obedient, disciplined and loyal to its leadership than a recipient of ‘the Rights of Man and Citizen,’ now known by the abbreviation, ‘human rights’ in official parlance.⁸ The sustenance of Nationalism, identity formation and creation of Patriotism are, therefore, overriding concerns for political stability in a ‘Civic-Republican’ citizenship-modelled state.

Nonetheless, the relegation of citizens to docility disenchanted the New Right who, not surprisingly, vouched for ‘active citizenship’ in the 1980s. This ‘liberal-individualist’ perspective on citizenship defines the citizen as much more than just a member of a nation-state who “simply drops scraps of paper in a box or pulls the lever.”⁹ “The engaged citizen takes responsibility for involvement in the public sphere. This involvement may be played out in local, state, national, or international arenas.”¹⁰

There are, however, two major strands within the liberal citizenship school of thought, namely the political and social or moral traditions. Concerning the former, an active citizen is one who has a high level of consciousness, particularly of the importance of the franchise. He uses wisely the vote. However, for the latter tradition, Thatcherism has it that:

⁷ R. Harris, “Citizenship and History: Uncomfortable Bedfellows,” in *Debates in History Teaching*, New York: Routledge, 2011, p. 190.

⁸ J. Tosh, *Why History Matters*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

⁹ Hess cited by W.C. Parker, "Advanced Ideas about Democracy: Toward a Pluralist Conception of Citizenship Education," A Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies, Phoenix: University of Washington, 1994, p. 12.

¹⁰ F.D. Drake and L.R. Nelson, *Engagement in Teaching History: Theory and Practice for Middle and Secondary Teachers*, Upper Saddle River: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall, 2005, p. 4.

The citizen ... [is] the willing volunteer ... [who is] ready to leap into the breach left by the retreating state provision in the social services. Through their voluntary and public-spirited efforts, citizens would render assistance where it was most needed, while emancipating themselves from the dead hand of the state. This [is] social rather than political citizenship.¹¹

Neo-liberal citizenship also places “greater emphasis on individual rights, with looser ties to the state, though there is a need to promote democratic values if liberal democracy is to thrive.”¹² According to Nziramasanga, those “rights and responsibilities should result in the development of citizens who can ... participate [positively and actively] in the affairs of their nation.”¹³ In a fully functional democracy, such rights and freedoms are typically broad-based. They include the:

Right to life ... Right to personal liberty ... Rights of arrested and detained persons ... Right to human dignity ... Right to personal security ... Right to privacy ... Right to administrative justice ... Right to fair hearing [trial by jury and civil liberties, such as:] Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment ... Freedom from slavery or servitude ... Freedom from forced or compulsory labour ... Freedom of assembly and association ... Freedom to demonstrate and petition ... Freedom of conscience ... Freedom of expression and freedom of the media ... Freedom of profession, trade or occupation ... Freedom of movement and residence [and] Freedom from arbitrary eviction.¹⁴

¹¹ J. Tosh, *Why History Matters*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p. 123.

¹² R. Harris, “Citizenship and History: Uncomfortable Bedfellows,” in *Debates in History Teaching*, New York: Routledge, 2011, p. 190.

¹³ C.T. Nziramasanga, “Realms of Citizenship Education: Concepts and Perspectives,” in *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, Working Paper Series, vol. 1, no. 1, 1991, p. 10.

¹⁴ The Parliamentary Constitution Select Committee (COPAC), 2013, pp. 35, 37-42, 46.

‘Communitarian citizenship’ is the precise opposite of the ‘liberal-individualist’ model of citizenship. Giddens argues: “The New Labour idea of ‘communitarian citizenship’ ... focuses upon the idea of ‘civic morality.’ It places emphasis upon the civic responsibilities of individuals to act as caring people in partnership with the state.”¹⁵ However, Socialists of the old school regard such an alliance as unholy, as they often perceive the state as a coercive apparatus that protects primarily the interests of Capitalism. Hence, to their way of thinking, the state institution should wither away eventually, when the much anticipated convivial, ‘classless’ societies become fully established.

Perhaps a more comprehensive and inclusive notion of citizenship is ‘community based,’ a concept borrowed from the Curriculum Council of Wales (CCW).¹⁶ A ‘citizen’ meant traditionally “an inhabitant of a city.”¹⁷ Today, it means “a legally recognized subject or national of a state or commonwealth.”¹⁸ However, in the overall scheme of things of the afore-mentioned council, a broadened purview of citizenship takes humanity as its explicit focus. Thus:

The term ‘community’ does not merely refer to those who live in the same regional or national location, but can also refer to [the general body of] people who feel a close sense of belonging and who do not

¹⁵ R. Phillips, "Reflective Teaching of History," *Continuum Studies in Reflective Practice and Theory*, 11-18, London: Continuum, 2002, p. 143.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ R.H. Poole, "Pronouncing, Explanatory, Etymological, with Common Technical Terms in Use in Science, the Arts and in Sports," *The New Imperial Reference Dictionary*, London: George Newnes, 1950, p. 193.

¹⁸ A. Stevenson and M. Waite, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 12th edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 261.

necessarily live in close geographic proximity. Therefore, [a 'community-based' citizenship] offer[s] a universal and pluralistic idea of identity, based, for example, on class, gender or ethnicity.¹⁹

Apparently, there is convergence of opinions at the idea that the ideal citizen should have the cognitive equipment to engage critically with the contemporary global village.²⁰ This view is born of the realization that the digital age has become overloaded with information. In the present century, citizens without political acumen may, for instance, get lost easily in a maze of conflicting interpretations. They may find it difficult "to see what newspapers are saying, to hear what is in (or left out of) a speech, or to talk to each other about public questions."²¹ Against this background, an attempt is therefore made, to appraise Zimbabwe's current efforts at preparing her citizens for taking their rightful places in the new globalized politico-socio-economic order. To set the stage for that appraisal, an overview of the history of Citizenship Education, in the country's national school curriculum, is in order.

The Profile of Citizenship Education in Zimbabwe

Three distinct periods, 1980-99, 2000-2014 and 2015 to the present have marked the development of the Citizenship Education curriculum, in post-Independence Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, these have been depressing phases in the history of the subject as it maintained a tenuous position in the country's primary and secondary schools.

¹⁹ R. Phillips, *Reflective Teaching of History*, 11-18, *Continuum Studies in Reflective Practice and Theory*, London: Continuum, 2002, p. 144.

²⁰ J. Tosh, *Why History Matters*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

²¹ C. Crabtree, G.B. Nash, P. Gagnon and S. Waug (eds), *Lessons from History: Essential Understandings and Historical Perspectives Students Should Acquire*: The National Centre for History in the Schools, A Cooperative UCLA/NEH Research Program, Los Angeles: University of California, 1992, p. 4.

The first phase covered almost two decades, after the country had attained national self-determination on 18 April 1980. That day had brought with it a thrill of anticipation. This was partly engendered by the prospects of “envisaged, radical changes to the inherited educational system ... which, hitherto, had served to sustain the interests of the colonial masters.”²² In line with public expectations, the first full decade of the new nation’s political independence saw the content, teaching and learning methodology, and assessment of sundry school subjects undergoing fundamental changes. However, not much had been done in the field of Citizenship Education over the same period. This was confirmed by Nziramasanga, who bemoaned the country’s loss of moral values.²³ He saw the general proliferation of social vices, such as vandalism among the Zimbabwean youths, as stemming from the:

mere absence and lack of a comprehensive formal Citizenship Education curriculum ... [The school youths] have hazy and/or fussy knowledge of our legal system, and the local government functional machinery (except those few who participate in Junior Councillors’ scheme), the national statutory laws affecting children, teenagers, adults, the industrial and commercial sectors, the working class, civil servants, the armed forces, and the entire education system of the country. It is paramount, therefore, that our youths, be they in school, clubs, or brigades, know that these matters affect citizens’ decision-making capabilities.²⁴

The writer in question made those remarks after he had observed that the content of Citizenship Education as provided for, then, in the country’s primary and secondary schools left much to be desired. At the primary

²² H. Chitate, *Change and Innovation in Curriculum Enterprise: An Analysis of the Implementation of the Post-Independence Zimbabwe, ‘O’ Level History Syllabus 2166*, Saarbrücken: Lambert, 2011, p. 12.

²³ C.T. Nziramasanga, “Realms of Citizenship Education: Concepts and Perspectives,” in *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, Working Paper Series, vol. 1, no. 1, 1991, p. 3.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

school level, a feeble attempt had been made to teach Citizenship Education as part of Social Studies. The Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), which had produced a module titled: *Living and Working Together Series for Grades 1 to 7*, made this possible. Those resource materials sought to grapple with topical issues, such as ‘rules and laws,’ ‘wealth and money,’ ‘social services’ and ‘voluntary organizations.’²⁵ Nevertheless, in his opinion, “while ... [that] curriculum ... [was] a commendable effort, the suggested content ... [was] far from the ideal.”²⁶

The situation in the secondary school sector was not satisfactory either:

There is virtually nothing specified as a Citizenship Education curriculum. What the writer has identified are two references. First, the Murapa, R. [and] M. Sithole’s M. (1986) *Junior Secondary Civics for Zimbabwe* booklet which attempt to provide a fairly good scope of Citizenship Education but is more concerned with “civics” than Citizenship Education. Second, is the, as yet abortive, “Political Economy” Syllabus.²⁷

New Citizenship Education syllabuses were designed subsequently for both the Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC) and the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) O-level pupils. They were accompanied by a somewhat sketchy resource document with the title: *Education for Living*. There was, however, no evidence of systematic implementation of those syllabi in the classrooms.²⁸ The situation remained unchanged up to the turn of the century.

Nevertheless, the assignment of a Commission of Inquiry into the country’s education and training systems, chaired by Dr. Caiphaz Tizamarwo Nziramasanga, by His Excellency, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces of the Republic of

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid, p. 3.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

Zimbabwe, on January 2 1998, appeared to have given Citizenship Education a new lease of life. The Commission was tasked, among other responsibilities, “to inquire into and report upon the fundamental changes to the current curriculum at all levels (TOR 1.3) so that education becomes a useful tool for character and citizenship development.”²⁹

Field research evidence obtained by the Commission confirmed the earlier observations that Nziramasanga had made on the teaching and learning of Citizenship Education in the country’s primary and secondary schools.³⁰ The Commission noted that:

During public and private hearings conducted throughout the country, people expressed concern about the absence of Citizenship Education in the school and tertiary education curricula. They called for the educational system to develop a spirit of national consciousness and patriotism through teaching the youth about themselves, their country, and its government system and functions.³¹

In the Commission’s considered opinion, Citizenship Education was, therefore, supposed to “be at the centre of the education curriculum for the Twenty First Century Zimbabwe.”³² The subject was deemed to be the sole medium of instruction in the virtues of citizenship and democracy. Consequently, the Commission recommended its teaching as a compulsory subject for all students across the education system. Most unfortunately, however, this and the other 238 recommendations made

²⁹ C.T. Nziramasanga, Zimbabwe Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training, Harare: Government Printers, 1998/9, p. 349.

³⁰ C.T. Nziramasanga, “Realms of Citizenship Education: Concepts and Perspectives,” in *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, Working Paper Series, vol. 1, no. 1, 1991.

³¹ C.T. Nziramasanga, Zimbabwe Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training, Harare: Government Printers, 1998/9, p. 350.

³² *Ibid*, p. 353.

by the Commission were never implemented as had originally been planned in the year 2000, and more than a decade elapsed before the findings were operationalized.³³

The rather unusual lengthy passage of time between public announcement of the findings of the Commission and their implementation resulted in “a myriad of developments, which impinge[d] on education. This ... necessitated a review of those recommendations.”³⁴ The review process subsequently took off in October 2014. It involved “wide-ranging consultations in which almost a million people (961,000) participated.”³⁵ The outcome was that the country produced a new draft curriculum codenamed: *The Zimbabwe Education Blueprint (2015-2022)*. This curriculum-design document now known officially as the *Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022* was adopted ultimately by Cabinet in 2016 and implemented in January 2017.

Zimbabwe’s New Curriculum (2015-2022)

Because of the constraints of space, the full contents of the above-mentioned curriculum are not given. The new curriculum is decidedly committed to:

promot[ing]... a competency-based approach which is realized through practical-oriented learning and other strategies. It is envisaged that the curriculum will shift from a content-based curriculum, which focuses on knowledge acquisition, to a competency-based curriculum, which focuses on the learner’s capacity to apply knowledge, skills and attitudes in an independent, practical and responsible way. This would

³³ H. Chitate, “Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM): A Case Study of Zimbabwe’s Educational Approach to Industrialization,” in *World Journal of Education*, vol. 6, no. 5, September 2016, p. 31.

³⁴ R.G. Mugabe, “Preamble,” in Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, *Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022*, Harare: Government Printers, 2015, p. i.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. ii.

mobilize the potential of Zimbabwean learners to compete successfully in the labour market locally and abroad.³⁶

The exit competencies, which the new curriculum seeks to develop among students, are those that are related to the development of skills, mastery of knowledge, identity formation, attitudinal values and certain dispositions. Those competencies are to be developed, not within the traditional framework of subject disciplines, but within the innovative concept of the ‘learning area,’ defined as a

cluster of knowledge domains around which related themes and topics are constructed. Therefore, learning areas constitute the content of the curriculum. Additionally, learning areas reflect crosscutting themes, which contribute towards the achievement of desired learning outcomes. Furthermore, learning areas define learning outcomes and provide depth and balance in learners’ education.³⁷

It is against this backdrop that Zimbabwe has adopted a cross-curricular approach to Citizenship Education. In fact, the subject does not all exist with that name in the new curriculum. What is provided for is a ‘cross-cutting theme’ called ‘Civic Education.’ Hence, the inordinate emphasis on traditional topics, such as civic ‘rights, duties and responsibilities;’ ‘national unity, identity and symbols;’ ‘patriotism;’ values of ‘obedience’ ‘discipline,’ ‘honesty,’ ‘and loyalty,’ all couched in the philosophy of ‘Unhu/Ubuntu/Vumunhu.’ It would thus appear that Zimbabwe has not created enough room for the development of its future citizens, who can participate effectively in ‘deliberative democratic’ processes.

Most regrettably, cross curricular approaches to teaching and learning school subjects have been found to be problematic.³⁸ Some of the chal-

³⁶ Zimbabwe MoPSE in Partnership with UNICEF and UNESCO, 2015, p. 10.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 30.

³⁸ P. Brett, "Citizenship through History - What is Good Practice?" 2005, www.researchgate.net/publication/24271718 [8.6.2017].

lenges include, lack of ‘shared understandings’ across departments, guaranteeing quality assurance and the difficulties of assessing those subjects.³⁹ Yet another problem is the critical shortage of the requisite work force. This particular problem appears to be acute in Zimbabwe and threatens to jeopardize her experiment with this ‘cross-curricular’ innovation. The country does not seem to have had trained teachers, who could handle ‘cross-curricular’ issues prior to the introduction of the new curriculum. This is in sharp contrast to Britain where, for example, Citizenship Education was given to teachers, who had received relevant training when the subject became a statutory element in her *National Curriculum* in 2002.⁴⁰ These were Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) teachers.

To address the work force issue, the MoPSE has encouraged teachers to improve themselves academically and embarked on an in-service, professional staff development programme. All these measures are designed to sensitize teachers in the requirements of the new curriculum. But as noted by Chitamba:

In general, with or without the new curriculum, the status quo in the country is that staff development is not taking place in a way or at a rate at which it is supposed to do is due to two main factors. Firstly, there is resistance among the qualified teachers ... and semi-qualified teachers ... to undergo training to upgrade their qualifications and acquire professional/teaching qualifications respectively. Secondly, both qualified and semi-qualified teachers are finding it difficult to further and upgrade their qualifications due to financial constraints owing to high

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ I. Davies, “Citizenship and the Teaching and Learning of History,” in J. Arthur and R. Phillips (eds), *Issues in History Teaching*, London: Routledge, 2011.

fees demanded by universities, against the current national economic quagmire.⁴¹

In-service training is grossly inadequate as can be gleaned from the words of the Education Minister Dr Lazarus Dokora: “Teachers are already in training to ensure that every school countrywide has at least one, but comfortably three, teachers conversant with the new developments in the curriculum.” Instruction in ‘cross-curricular’ issues, including citizenship, therefore, seems to be compromised.⁴²

The place of Citizenship Education in the Zimbabwean school curriculum has also been made precarious by the introduction of Heritage Studies. This late comer has effectively displaced History, Citizenship Education’s ‘comfortable bedfellow’ from its central place in the curriculum, as it has been made the queen of ‘Life-skills Orientation Programme (LOP)-Social Studies.’ As a result, History has now been made an optional subject. Yet without it, Citizenship cannot be intelligible to students.

Knowledge of history is the pre-condition of political intelligence. Without it, one cannot undertake any sensible inquiry into political, economic, moral issues in society. And without inquiry, one cannot move to the active, discriminating citizenship essential to the survival of democratic processes and the fulfilment of the democratic ideals... History illuminates the roots of contemporary issues and problems; it reveals the ambiguity of choice, the unresolved questions every society has faced; it promotes wariness about quick, facile solutions, which have so often brought human suffering in their wake.⁴³

⁴¹ J. Chitamba, “140 000 Teachers: Preparing Today’s Teachers for Tomorrow: Staff Development for the Curriculum,” in *Teacher in Zimbabwe*, Issue 3, 2015, p. 21.

⁴² R. Mukondiwa, “It’s a Marathon, not a Sprint,” in *Teacher in Zimbabwe*, Issue 3, 2015, p. 12.

⁴³ C. Crabtree, G.B. Nash, P. Gagnon and S. Waugh (eds), *Lessons from History: Essential Understandings and Historical Perspectives Students Should Acquire: The National Centre for History in the Schools. A Cooperative*

Two vital points are identifiable in the above quote. Firstly, besides preparing citizens in the virtues of critical thinking skills, History provides a ‘mode of thought’ or perspective that is indispensable to Citizenship Education. Secondly, “the study of the past, the object of History, illuminates and deepens pupils’ understanding of the present, the object of Citizenship Education.”⁴⁴ “Heritage Studies programmes are welcomed by writers like Mhonda because they “create patriotic citizens.”⁴⁵ However, what we need are citizens, who can think critically. The main problem with the subject is that it is partisan and celebratory. It tends to “conjure up a past that is false or nostalgic, misleading in one form or the other.”⁴⁶ The subject, therefore, cannot be a substitute for History.

In the last analysis, the criticality of returning History and Citizenship Education to the centre of the school curriculum in Zimbabwe cannot be over-emphasized. One may conclude with Batho’s observation: “Whether we teach citizenship as a subject in its own right or as a cross-

UCLA/NEH Research Program, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992, p. 14.

⁴⁴ H. Chitate, “Zimbabwe’s O-level History Syllabus 2167 and the Call for Citizenship Education,” in M.M. Madondo, G. Museka, and M. Phiri (eds), *The Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (Nziramasanga Commission): Implementation Successes, Challenges and Opportunities*, Harare: The Human Resources Research Centre, 2014, p. 88.

⁴⁵ T. Mhonda, “Teaching Heritage Studies in Post-colonial Zimbabwe,” in *The Patriot*, 19.11.2015, p. 1.

⁴⁶ C. Crabtree, G.B. Nash, P. Gagnon and S. Waugh (eds), *Lessons from History: Essential Understandings and Historical Perspectives Students Should Acquire: The National Centre for History in the Schools*, A Cooperative UCLA/NEH Research Program, Los Angeles: University of California, 1992, p. 7.

curricular scheme, teach we must and teach it well. Our future depends on it.”⁴⁷

⁴⁷ G.R. Batho, “The Teaching of Citizenship in England,” in A. Dickinson, (ed) *Perspectives on Change in Education: A Publication Based on the Proceedings of the Second Anglo-Hungarian History Teaching Seminar*, London: History in Education Section of the Institute of Education University of London, 1992, p. 79.

Chapter 3

Re-Tooling the Bible for Citizenry Participation, Transformation and Development in Southern Africa

Eliot Tofa

Introduction

In the struggle for independence, the Bible was used by liberation movements in Africa to rally oppressed masses against the colonial governments. One of the strategies taken was to denounce the missionary enterprise for pioneering the colonization of Africa by planting the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jomo Kenyatta, the then president of Kenya is, for example, known for saying that “when the missionaries arrived, the Africans had the land and the missionaries had the Bible. They taught us how to pray with our eyes closed. When we opened them, they had the land and we had the Bible.”¹ The same notions reverberated across the African continent. For example, the Shona people of Zimbabwe had a similar saying: “The settlers had the Bible in the one hand and a gun in the other.”² The thinking is that the Bible was instrumental in the deprivation and colonization of the African continent; the sacred book was used to perpetrate injustices by the capitalist monopoly.

¹ M. Kentake, "Ten Powerful Quotes by Jomo," <http://kentakepage.com/ten-powerful-quotes-by-jomo-kenyatta> [25.10.2017].

² This is one of the sayings common among the Shona people in Zimbabwe.

In their search for self-determination, the nationalist movements counter-used the Bible in the struggle for independence. One of the famous statements upon which the principles and aspirations of liberation struggles across Africa were anchored was an epic revised biblical quotation by Kwame Nkrumah: “Seek ye first the political kingdom and all things shall be added unto you.”³ Since then, the use of the Bible as an instrument in politics has continued in post-independence Africa, this time as a contest between incumbent parties and opposition parties. It is against this background that this chapter examines how the Bible is used in inter-party politics, particularly by incumbent parties to demonize and delegitimize opposition party politics. To put this phenomenon into perspective, it is important to give a brief examination of the trajectory of party politics in southern Africa.

Political Formations in Southern Africa: From Pre-independence to the Present

A close look at the history of the struggle for independence in Africa would give us some insights on how political formations in southern Africa evolved and defined themselves from the beginning. It is important to note that most of these movements were formed under the spirit of patriotism. This explains why the liberation movements defined themselves as patriotic Africans in struggle for the independence of the motherland. The African National Congress of South Africa; the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) in Zimbabwe and the Patriotic Front in Zambia are a few examples. A couple of years down the line, opposition parties emerged in post-independence Africa – the birth of the so-named democrats for change. These opposition parties

³ President Kwame Nkrumah in his most famous book, *Africa Must Unite*, calling for full political participation for radical transformation towards independence (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963, p. 50).

claim to be founded on the principles of democracy and good governance as imbued in such names as the Movement for Democratic Change of Zimbabwe; the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) in Zambia, the United Democratic Front in Malawi, the Democratic Alliance (DA) in South Africa, and so on. These formations have, in some cases, even won legislative and presidential elections.

By the turn of the millennium, there has been a new wave of political platforms: the formation of Christianized political parties. These are organizations founded on biblical teachings and principles, including para-church organizations, that are affiliated to the Church, like the Christian Democratic Party of South Africa, Transform Zimbabwe, and the Christian Democratic Party of Zimbabwe. These political formations work closely with ecumenical bodies and like-minded consortiums like, in Zimbabwe: Divine Destiny, Christian Alliance, Christian Act Trust, Prayer Network Zimbabwe, Pastors Fellowship or the Student Christian Movement. The presence of Christianized political parties in Southern Africa today certainly indicates the realization by the electorate of a need to elect God-fearing leaders to political office in order for God's people to "have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). The presence of Christianized political parties at this stage is also understood as a response to poor governance coupled with gross violation of the rights of God's people by incumbent parties in the last decade.

One would ask what motivated the formation of these parties, given the belief that the church is commissioned to preach the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ:

The fact that the Bible does not encourage us to attempt to use means to bring governmental change should lead us to conclude that political activism must not be very important to God rather focus on God's mission and feed the afflicted soul with the healing word. It is true that

Jesus Christ did not seek to bring change in the political realm but transform mankind, prepare them for the kingdom of the Father.⁴

For this reason, faithful believers are to submit themselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority (1 Peter 2:13) and should not set up kings without His consent; "they choose princes without my approval" (Hosea 8:4). To this end, some churches teach:

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves (Rom 13:1-2, NIV).

It was the stance of the church but the presence of Christianized political formation indicates a revision of this doctrine and that, by engaging in politics, believers are actually participating in a religious mission.⁵ By not engaging and confronting leaders who violate the rights of the people of God, the church is not fulfilling its divine mandate. To this end, the church became a very important constituent for citizenry participation, transformation and development in southern Africa.

The Bible and Political Rhetoric in Southern Africa

I now move on to highlight ways in which the Bible has been used in political rhetoric during national election campaigns in southern Africa. I specifically consider a few selected statements made in the last seven years suggesting possible reasons for doing so. To begin with, in the run-up to the 2010 and 2015 national elections, the ANC, among other

⁴ A. Aboneka, "Providing a Sharing and Reflection Platform for NGOs in Uganda," 2015, <http://ngoforum.or.ug/why-the-church-should-not-endorse-political-leaders> [23.10.2017].

⁵ D.W. Bebbington, in G. Marti (ed), *Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review*, 75(2), 1989, p. 398.

strategies, quoted biblical texts to influence the decision-making processes of the voters:

When you vote for the ANC, you are also choosing to go to heaven. When you don't vote for the ANC you should know that you are choosing that man who carries a fork ... who cooks people.⁶

In another platform, it was said that “ANC would rule until Christ comes again”⁷ meaning that there is no way the party would not win in any election.

Another example of the politicization of the Bible in southern Africa is from Zimbabwe. Political figures in Zimbabwe—a predominantly Christian country—have realized the need to preach a gospel that resonates with certain biblical ‘truths’ in order to reach the hearts of Christian voters. This has resulted in the marketing of religious ideas in the political economy, especially on the question of same sex relationships in Zimbabwe. Same-sex unions are considered unnatural and sinful;⁸ the most heinous acts that violate the biblical model of being “fruitful and multiplying, and fill the earth and subdue it” (Gen 2:28). The politicization of the Bible with regard to sex-relationships became more pronounced in national elections and the most recent constitution-making process when the opposition called for the recognition of the rights of lesbians and gays.⁹ The statement - “My attitude is that I hope the constitution will come out with freedom of sexual orientation, for as

⁶ *Reporter News24* "Zuma's Heaven Remark no Earthly Good," www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Politics/Zumas-heaven-remark-no-earthly-good20110207 [23.10.2017].

⁷ *Reporter*, "ANC to Rule until Jesus Comes Back," *Cape Times*, 5 May 2008.

⁸ J.K. Wellman, *Evangelicals vs Liberal: The Clash of Christian Cultures in the Pacific Northwest*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

⁹ "Tsvangirai Embraces Gay Rights," *Reporter*, 2011, www.herald.co.zw/tsvangirai-embraces-gay-rights [23.20.2017].

long as it does not interfere with anybody”¹⁰ - was used to vilify MDC-T as a party and that voting for the party would subvert national order and values and the foundation built on tradition and the correct teaching of the Bible. In the same way, adopting a constitution that recognizes the rights of sexual minorities is a very dangerous thing to do; would certainly coerce a Bible-believing nation to be recruited into blessing such ‘ungodly’ practices.¹¹ The question that one asks is: What does this mean with regard to citizenry participation to enhance national development?

The Bible and Citizen Participation: A Discussion

In the preceding discussion, we have seen how the Bible is used in politics. We have seen how texts such as Romans 13, Hosea 8:4 and John 10:10 are interpreted by the politicians to encourage the electorate to take active part in religious mission – voting for the right candidate that respects the fundamental rights of the people of God.

This development has been received with incumbent parties as a “rebellious” act, a rebellion against divinely ordained authority as suggested by the claim that people have to vote for ANC to enter heaven. It is clear that incumbent parties and opposition parties interpret this scripture differently. On the one hand, the opposition argues that God cannot establish an authority which abducts, tortures and maims citizens because they espouse an alternative vision for the country. But for the former, “true” Christians have to take what the Bible says literally about political leadership in our midst. The point I make here is that the Bible

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ For a differentiated presentation of the homosexuality debate see: Jones Hamburu Mawerenga, *The Homosexuality Debate in Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2018. For the African debate see pp. 157-204, for the religious debate see pp. 352-394.

is an important tool in the political sphere in southern African politics. But the question is: Do they use the Bible in good faith or do they merely use it to legitimize their rule? Do those parties founded on biblical teachings use the Bible in better faith than others and what is the electorate's response to the politicization of the sacred texts in Christianity?

My observation is that the Bible is used by the incumbent parties not only to hold on to power but to exclude, vilify, and demonize the opposition political parties. To claim that leaders are "ordained" by God in a multi-party political system negates full participation of the voters in the election processes. This is one of the reasons that has arguably promoted electoral fraud and post-election violence in our countries when the "divinely" appointed leaders kill, rig the ballot and use other unconstitutional means to remain in power for eternity. On the other hand, the Bible has been used in opposition politics to, among other things, denounce politically motivated wrongs such as abductions, killings, hate speech, and so forth, on the grounds that the Bible speaks about justice. The message is that the perpetrators are "evil" and the time has now come for people to vote for God-fearing leaders.

Those parties which are founded on Biblical teachings have tended to take the position that it is not enough for political parties to use the Bible, especially considering that some parties use the Bible even if they commit heinous acts against their opponents, but that it is important for the country to be led by people who "know God." The use of the Bible by each player has promoted or limited citizen participation: it has been used more as a tool to polarize society, to exclude and to "other" political opponents, including by those parties which are founded on Biblical principles and teachings. It is a fact the Bible is being used as an instrument to appeal to Christians to vote for a given political party. This explains why political leaders align themselves with such Christian communities that take Romans 13 seriously. By voting incumbent leaders into office, they are participating in a religious mission.

Scripture is taken as the ultimate authority that legitimizes their presence and dominance in the political field. The other observation is that there are tendencies of the parties to thrive on the teachings of the Bible they know will evoke the feelings and emotions of the Christian community. The thinking is something like this: It is unlikely that the committed Christians would hate the “sin” of having same-sex union and still vote for the person who engages in such “immoral” acts. This would not demonstrate commitment to the Christian faith: The point is, by voting out such people they are refusing to associate themselves with such people and their works. On the other hand, those who vote for such people would incur the open threat of divine judgement. The only way to “salvation” is to vote for incumbent leaders in order to be at peace with God. The truth is that such threatening statements are ungodly and nothing but dirty politicking!

The appeal to tradition and scriptures is not only true for the said parties but for the Christianity-based political parties as well. Their political manifestos are embedded in biblical teachings, motifs and approaches to what they consider as unjust in post-colonial Africa. On the contrary, the so-called democrats tend to appeal to what they consider as the spirit of the modern age – the spirit of progressivism fermenting a war of cultures. This polarization is one of the factors that have generated political intolerance as well as violence in our political landscape. This is the political climate characterizing southern Africa today and the question is: What is the way forward? The answer lies in what I will shortly suggest in my concluding remarks.

Re-tooling the Bible for Citizenry Participation and Development in Politics

The observation I have made is that our political environment is tense and what worries most is that some political figures are in the fore front, for example, boasting of having several degrees of violence. Instead of

uniting nations, they, through rhetoric, divide communities. Possibly, a designed strategy to divide and rule which does greater harm as communities are experiencing politically motivated violence. We are also seeing increasing polarization; there is a divide between and among Christians given the nature of the politicization of the sacred text. The use of language of hate using biblical motifs such as, maligning opposition, blaming the opponents for serving the interests of the West, calling them Judas Iscariots possessed by demons and declaring them sell-outs to which they chant the slogan: “*Down with ---*” or “*phansiba---*” or “*Pasina---*.” This language certainly does not build our communities and there is a need to embrace a language that moves nations forward!

By using such rhetoric, we are sliding back to the pre-colonial period and it reminds me of how, for example, Zimbabwe as a nation, after independence, revised the slogan to:

Forward with development	Pambeiri nebudiriro
The ignorant?	Vasingazivike?
Should be educated	Ngavataridzive ngwara

The slogan was that opponents should be taught the correct way of doing things, not that they must be forced, beaten, tortured or intimidated into submission. To this end, I also see slogans that have also characterized political rhetoric in Zimbabwe opposition – *bwa!* (destroy!) and “*jambaja*” (cause havoc) as a clear manifestation of political immaturity that fans out hatred, dissension and tension in otherwise peaceful communities. My point is that we must be on guard against this kind of language in our communities.

It is regrettable that, in the on-going implosion of political formations, many of our politicians are intolerant to diversity. The assertion that ANC will rule until Christ comes may be misunderstood and seen as a clear sign of drifting towards one-partyism. The question one may ask is: Should politicians desist from using the Bible in the political sphere? To

think so is to miss the point as we see the formation of Christianized parties taking the pro-life position. These religious organizations are re-tooling the Bible as the starting point of creating a new political dispensation characterized by fairness, justice and peace. If all players are true to the principle of love – Love your neighbour as yourself (Mark 12:31) – certainly, transformation of the political landscape for greater participation of the citizens is assured.

Conclusion

Often, we hear people say that politics is a dirty game and each time I hear such a statement, I ask myself: Who invented this saying? My view is that selfish and bad politicians come up with this statement to legitimize what they do wrong. By repeating this statement, we are, in fact, sanctifying this view. There is a great need to revise our talk and to completely eradicate some words in our political rhetoric – *bwah! jambaja*, dirty – from our vocabulary. Why should we not say: “Politics is a clean game”? We certainly need to rethink about the way we use rhetoric if we are concerned about promoting open and free citizenry participation as we map the future of our nations.

Chapter 4

Kenneth Skelton versus Nolbert Kunonga in Light of Responsible Citizenship Discourse

Prosper Muzambi

Introduction

It is generally agreed that the concept of citizenship is wide in its connotation. It goes beyond the acquisition of birth, national and death certificates. In this chapter I argue that the colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwean landscape is characterized by different forms of citizenship.¹ In order to drive this point home, this chapter presents a comparative analysis of two bishops of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe, who are considered as representative voices of citizenship of their times. On the one hand, there is Kenneth Skelton, a bishop in Ian Smith's Rhodesia, while on the other there is Nolbert Chinembiri Kunonga, a bishop in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. Their views are subjected to a theologically inspired responsible citizenship discourse analysis.

Conceptual Clarity

Despite earlier popularity of the concept of citizenship in political philosophy, the end of the 1970s saw the waning phase of this ideology.

¹ Dominic Pasura, 'Rights beyond Borders: The Zimbabwean Diaspora and the Politics of Citizenship,' in David Kaulemu (ed.), *Imagining Citizenship in Zimbabwe*, Harare: The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in association with African Forum for Social Teaching (AFCAST), 2013.

It was out of this observation that van Gunsteren asserted that “the concept of citizenship has gone out of fashion among political thinkers.”² A revival of interest in this concept is noted by Kymlicka and Norman who argue that there has been a recent explosion of interest in the concepts of citizenship among political theorists.³ David Scobey has referred to this revival as the “‘return of the citizen’ in public and policy discourse.”⁴ This is a reflection of a growing belief in many quarters that we are living in what sociologist and former President of Brazil Fernando Henrique Cardoso has referred to as “an age of citizenship.”⁵ This change came about in the mid-1990s when this concept became a ‘buzz word’ in the political thinkers’ realm.⁶ Bellamy expresses it succinctly when he asserts that “interest in citizenship has never been higher. Politicians of all stripes stress its importance, as do church leaders, captains of industry, and every kind of campaigning group – from those supporting global causes, such as tackling world poverty, to others with a largely local focus, such as combating neighbourhood crime.”⁷ Governments across the world have promoted the teaching of citizenship in schools and universities, and introduced citizenship tests for immigrants seeking to

² Herman van Gunsteren, "Notes towards a Theory of Citizenship," in Fred Dallmayr (ed), *From Contract to Community: Political Theory at the Crossroads*, Dekker, 1978, p. 9.

³ Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, *Return of the Citizen: A Survey of Recent Work on Citizenship Theory in Ethics*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, vol. 104:2, 1994, p. 352.

⁴ David Scobey, "The Specter of Citizenship in Citizenship Studies," 5(1), 2001, p. 20.

⁵ Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "An Age of Citizenship" in *Foreign Policy*, 119 (Summer), 2000.

⁶ Derek Heater, *Citizenship: The Civic Ideal in World History, Politics, and Education*, London: Longman, 1990, p. 293.

⁷ Richard Bellamy, *Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 1.

become naturalized citizens.⁸ The Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's '*Family and Religious Syllabus Forms 1-4 and Forms 5-6*' includes 'Good Citizenship, Social Responsibility and Governance' as part of its cross-cutting themes.⁹ David Kaulemu edited a book *Imagining Citizenship in Zimbabwe* where various Zimbabwean scholars articulate on citizenship.¹⁰ The contribution by Ruzivo Munetsi is adapted for this research as it traces the philosophical and religious origins of this concept.¹¹

There is a wide variety of citizenship,¹² and the sheer variety and range of these different uses of citizenship can be somewhat baffling. This makes it practically impossible to have a wide-ranging discussion of this concept in one research, hence, the focus of this study is on the religious connotations of citizenship with focus on the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe with emphasis on the contributions of two bishops already cited above.

⁸ Pharaoh Joseph Mavhunga, Nathan Moyo and Hedwick Chinyani, "Towards a Citizenship Education for Zimbabwe," in *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2012, p. 47.

⁹ Family and Religious Studies Syllabus - Forms 1-4, 2015, p. 5

¹⁰ David Kaulemu (ed), *Imagining Citizenship in Zimbabwe*, Harare: The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in Association with African Forum for Social Teaching (AFCAST), 2013.

¹¹ Ruzivo Munetsi, "Citizenship in the Christian World: Origins and Development of the Concept," in David Kaulemu (ed), *Imagining Citizenship in Zimbabwe*, Harare: The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in Association with African Forum for Social Teaching (AFCAST), 2013.

¹² P. Muzambi, "Religion, Citizenship and the State of Zimbabwe: The Politics of Zimbabwe's First Lady Grace Mugabe," in M.C. Green, R.I.J. Hackett, L. Hansen and F. Venter (eds), *Religious Pluralism, Heritage and Social Development in Africa*, Stellenbosch: Conf-RAP, 2017.

Historical Roots of Citizenship: Towards a Definition

One way of arriving at a plausible definition of citizenship in the theological discipline can be done by tracing the historical origins of the term from ancient Greece (the time of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle), the time of Jesus and Paul of Tarsus, the Patristic period, the Mediaeval period, the Reformation period, the Modern period, the Enlightenment period, and the Contemporary period¹³. These are history making moments in the development of philosophical, theological, and political thought. Digging through the historical origins of this concept culminated in Simon and Brooks asserting that¹⁴

The idea, definition, and role of citizenship have been formed and have often evolved over thousands of years of history. Many theorists have examined the concept of citizenship and offered definitions of its meaning and boundaries. Controversy has arisen over the rights of citizenship, how one becomes a citizen, and the obligations that come from having citizenship. From its Greek origins and Aristotle, to philosophers Rousseau and Kant, the idea of citizenship has developed and so have theories of its meaning.¹⁵

The concept 'citizenship' can be traced far back to the Aristotelian foundation of Greek citizenship that was predicated on two principal virtues,

¹³ This periodization is adopted from Alistair E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2012. An estimate puts the dating of these key phases in the development of Theology as follows: The Patristic Period 100-451, The Middle Ages and Renaissance 1000-1500, The Reformation and Post-Reformation Periods 1500-1700, The Modern Period 1700 to the Present.

¹⁴ Rita Simon and Alison Brooks, *Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship the World Over*, New York: Lexington Books, 2009, p. 1.

¹⁵ Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, *Return of the Citizen: A Survey of Recent Work on Citizenship Theory in Ethics*, vol. 104, Issue 2, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994, pp. 352-381.

namely the virtue necessary to rule and that necessary to be ruled.¹⁶ Citizenry in this setup comprised the rulers and those that were ruled. This arises from Aristotle's definition of a citizen as "he who has the power to take part in the deliberative or judicial administration of any state."¹⁷ Roman citizenship was a privilege and was conferred only onto certain individuals. Slaves were granted citizenship once they were freed. Women's rights were very limited as they were excluded from political participation and had significantly limited legal rights.¹⁸ In ancient Athens, the majority of its 200,000 inhabitants was not considered citizens and was without the rights of citizenship.¹⁹ Athens' population was divided into social classes, each group possessing its own status in society. After the Greek-Persian Wars each person was afforded the full rights of citizenship, irrespective of their social class. Some of the rights of citizenship included the right to vote, propose laws, and to sue. Women were not afforded full citizenship rights. Athenian citizenship was considered an active status and involved participation in civic and social life within the larger community. Citizens could lose their citizenship or be exiled from Athens if they acted inappropriately. Foreigners

¹⁶ Pharaoh Joseph Mavhunga, Nathan Moyo and Hedwick Chinyani, "Towards a Citizenship Education for Zimbabwe," in *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2012, p. 48; cf. Munetsi Ruzivo, "Civil Religion in Zimbabwe: Unpacking the Concept," in E. Chitando (ed), *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books, 2013.

¹⁷ As cited in C. Patterson, "Athenian Citizenship Law," in M. Gagarin and D. Cohen (ed), *Ancient Greek Law*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 267–289.

¹⁸ J. Gardner, *Being a Roman Citizen*, London: Routledge, 1993.

¹⁹ Rita Simon and Alison Brooks, *Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship the World Over*, New York: Lexington Books, 2009, p. 1. A detailed account of this is in: I. Radulovic, "Citizenship in Ancient Greece—Athens and Sparta: Terms and Sources," in S.G. Ellis, G. Halfdanarson and A.K. Isaacs (ed), *Citizenship in Historical Perspective*, Pisa University Press, 2006, pp. 25–34.

who had settled in Athens were called “metics” and were responsible for many obligations of citizenship, including paying taxes and serving in the military, but were not afforded the rights of citizenship. This group of second-class citizens could, in extraordinary circumstances, be granted Athenian citizenship.

To be a citizen one had to be a male aged 20 or over, of known genealogy being born to an Athenian citizen family, to be a patriarch of a household, a warrior – possessing the arms and ability to fight – and a master of the labour of others, notably slaves. So, gender, race, and class defined citizenship, and many of the main contemporary debates turn on how far they continue to do so. As a result, large numbers were excluded: women (though married Athenian women were citizens for genealogical purposes); children; immigrants, or ‘metics’ including those whose families had been settled in Athens for several generations (although they were legally free, liable to taxation, and had military duties); and above all, slaves. It is reckoned that the number of citizens in Athens fluctuated between 30,000 and 50,000, while the number of slaves was of the order of 80,000 to 100,000.²⁰ Therefore, citizenship was enjoyed by a minority. The majority of the population, particularly women and slaves, sustained the system.

Though in the Greek model citizenship was the privilege of a minority, it provided a considerable degree of popular control over government. Of course, it is known that the Assembly and Council tended to be dominated by the high born and wealthy. It is also true that Aristotle’s ideal of concord was often far from the reality, at least in Athens. There

²⁰ John A.A. Ayoade, “States without Citizens: An Emerging African Phenomenon,” in Richard Bellamy, *Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 31.

were persistent tensions between different classes and factions.²¹ Disagreements there were often bitter and personal, ending with the physical removal of opponents through ostracism or even their execution on trumped-up charges of treason. Nonetheless, in a very real sense, those people who qualified as citizens did rule, thereby giving us the word ‘democracy,’ from the Greek *demokratia*, or people (*demos*) rule (*kratos*).²²

Roman citizenship was generally acquired by birth if both parents were citizens or granted by the populace. However, some rights of citizenship were restricted according to property qualifications. Cities that were conquered by Rome were given limited citizenship without the right to vote (Latin rights), making them an early group of second class citizens.²³ Gould and Kolb provide what can be regarded as a contemporary conception of citizenship, defining it as “a state of relationship existing between a natural person and a political society known as a state, by which the former owes allegiance and the latter protection.”²⁴ Taking this conception further, Cogan and Derricott came up with five basic tenets of citizenship:²⁵

- A sense of dignity;
- The enjoyment of certain rights;
- The fulfilment of corresponding obligations;
- A degree of interest in public affairs and;

²¹ Ibid, p. 34.

²² Ibid.

²³ J. Gardner, *Being a Roman Citizen*, London: Routledge, 1993.

²⁴ R.E. Gould and W.L. Kolb (eds), *A Dictionary of the Social Sciences*, New York: Free Press, 1964, p. 88.

²⁵ John J. Cogan and Ray Derricott, *Citizenship for the 21st Century – An International Perspective on Education*, New York: Routledge, 2012.

- An acceptance of basic social values.

Against this background, nations feel obliged to put in place measures to develop a good citizen who subscribes to the basic tenets above. But, further still, this notion of a good citizen, which this research equates to ‘responsible citizenship,’ needs further elaboration. Gross and Dynneson define a good citizen as one who cares about the welfare of others, is moral and ethical in dealing with others, is able to challenge and critically question ideas, proposals and suggestions, and in light of existing circumstances is able to make good choices based upon good judgment.²⁶ With these attributes of a good citizen in mind, the next question is: How can nations, through their governments and religious institutions, develop the good citizen for their envisaged good societies?²⁷ This forms a foundation upon which the need to investigate what a theologically informed responsible citizenship for Zimbabwe entails. A sizeable amount of literature has looked at what citizenship really encompasses. However, for the Zimbabwean context, there is still need to interrogate what religion in general, and Anglicanism in particular, ought to offer in terms of responsible citizenship. Is it to pacify? Is it to create and mold critical citizens who are objective in socio-economic and political issues? This chapter responds to these critical questions by comparing two bishops, namely, Kenneth Skelton and Nolbert Kunonga.

The ancient societies have influenced in many ways modern states’ views and citizenship laws. T.H. Marshall is well known for his theory on citizenship expressed in his 1949 essay, “Citizenship and Social

²⁶ Richard E. Gross and Thomas L. Dynneson (eds), *Social Science Perspectives on Citizenship Education*, New York: Teachers College Press, 1990, p. 4.

²⁷ See John J. Cogan and Ray Derricott, *Citizenship for the 21st Century – An International Perspective on Education*, New York: Routledge, 2012; Richard E. Gross and Thomas L. Dynneson (eds), *Social Science Perspectives on Citizenship Education*, New York: Teachers College Press, 1990.

Class.”²⁸ Marshall proposes citizenship as something that guarantees that each person is treated as a full member of society through the delineation of rights. Marshall notes that through the expansion of rights in England from the 18th to the 20th century, the social classes of citizens were improved. He divides citizenship into three elements: civil, political, and social.²⁹ The civil component of citizenship includes freedom of speech³⁰ and the right to own property. Marshall considered this element to be necessary for individual freedom. The political component is made up of rights associated with political power and included the right to free elections. Lastly, the social component consists of rights providing people with security and economic well-being. Marshall’s theory of citizenship is characterized as being a passive take on the concept, since it does not require a citizen’s participation in society. Due to this, many people have criticized Marshall and developed differing theories on citizenship. Bellamy is one of the modern scholars who added the component of participation.³¹

²⁸ Thomas H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*, Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1965.

²⁹ Rita Simon and Allison Brooks, *Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship the World Over*, New York: Lexington Books, 2009, p. 2.

³⁰ See *Constitution of Zimbabwe*, Chapter 4, Section 61 on Freedom of Speech, 2013.

³¹ John A.A. Ayoade, "States without Citizens: An Emerging African Phenomenon," in Richard Bellamy, *Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

As a way of complementing Cogan and Derricott's five components,³² I adopt Bellamy's conceptualization of citizenship.³³ In his work towards a definition of citizenship, Bellamy notes that the components of this concept are membership, rights, and participation.³⁴ He contends that these three are inseparable. Citizenship, therefore, has an intrinsic link to democratic politics. It involves membership of an exclusive membership of an exclusive club—those who take the decisions about collective life of a given political community. And the character of that community in many ways reflects what people make it. In particular, their participation or lack of it plays an important role in determining how far, and in what ways, it treats people as equals. Thus, as already pointed out, three linked components of citizenship emerge from this analysis—membership of a democratic political community, the collective benefits and rights associated with membership, and participation in the community's political, economic, and social processes—all of which combine in different ways to establish a condition of civic equality.

The above finds resonance in Kymlicka and Norman as they contend that a citizen is seen as “someone who has democratic rights and claims of justice.”³⁵ Marshall's understanding of citizenship, noted above, with his triad of ingredients, namely, “having civil, political and social rights”

³² John J. Cogan and Ray Derricott, *Citizenship for the 21st Century – An International Perspective on Education*, New York: Routledge, 2012.

³³ John A.A. Ayoade, "States without Citizens: An Emerging African Phenomenon," in Richard Bellamy, *Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 12-26.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 16.

³⁵ Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, *Return of the Citizen: A Survey of Recent Work on Citizenship Theory in Ethics*, vol. 104, Issue 2, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994, p. 368; Joseph H. Carens, *Culture, Citizenship, and Community - A Contextual Exploration of Justice as Evenhandedness*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

needs further elucidation.³⁶ Citizenship in this case has the following: First, citizenship as legal status, defined by civil, political and social rights. Second, citizens are considered specifically as political agents, actively participating in a society's political institutions. Third is the identity dimension of citizenship, which enables citizens to claim the right to be recognized as a unique group within a society and this can be on language, cultural, religious or ethnical basis.³⁷ Thus, the element of identity, though implied in Bellamy's analysis, is clearly articulated by Joseph Carens.³⁸

In some circumstances, it can be argued that those who appeal to an authority outside the supreme law of their land can claim to be guided by their conscience³⁹. Henry Thoreau is an example. In *Civil Disobedience*, he tells why he went to jail rather than pay tax to a government which condoned human slavery. A favourite essay both of Tolstoy and Gandhi, it is perhaps the most effective statement that has ever been made against

³⁶ K. Marshall and M. van Saanen, *Development and Faith. Where Mind and Soul Work Together*, Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2007, p. 172.

³⁷ In a presentation titled 'Kairos and Empire' at Kairos30 Conference held at Banting Campus, University of Johannesburg 19th August 2015, Mitri Raheb, a Palestinian academic and specialist in Empire Theology offered some insights that can serve as a critique to the identity component of citizenship. He argued that the Empire thrives on uniformity, that is, one language, one culture, centralized system of governance. Such being the case, it is tenable to contend that the identity dimension of citizenship is not envisaged as an ideal part of the Empire. If anything, Empire wants to destroy these identities and this is a fact that can be observed in formerly colonized states whereby the ideologies that still control the general public are those of the Empire. Some lost their language, a vehicle through which culture is transmitted.

³⁸ Joseph H. Carens, *Culture, Citizenship, and Community - A Contextual Exploration of Justice as Evenhandedness*, Oxford University Press, 2000.

³⁹ See *Constitution of Zimbabwe*, Chapter 4, Section 60 on freedom of conscience, 2013.

government as coercion and for the right of the individual to obey the dictates of his conscience rather than the dictates of the state.⁴⁰ This research will also investigate whether this was the spirit that prodded Skelton and Kunonga to go public about their opinions regardless of the consequences of their decisions.

Plausible Definition

Bellamy asserts that membership, rights, and participation go together.⁴¹ Under membership, one can add the identity dimension in the sense that the common denominator in any given state is nationality. However, people have the right to claim particular identities such as linguistic, cultural, religious, and political. Bellamy further argues that it is through being a member of a political community and participating on equal terms in the framing of its collective life that we enjoy rights to pursue our individual lives on fair terms with others. If we put these three elements, the following can be regarded as a plausible definition:

Citizenship is a condition of civic equality. It consists of membership of a political community where all citizens can determine the terms of social cooperation on an equal basis. This status not only secures equal rights to the enjoyment of the collective goods provided by the political association but also involves equal duties to promote and sustain them – including the good of democratic citizenship itself.⁴²

⁴⁰ S. Commins and R.N. Linscott, *The World's Great Thinkers_ Man and the State: The Political Philosophers*, New York: Random House, 1947; Zimbabweans can claim the right to freedom of conscience as articulated by the country's supreme law (cf. Constitution of Zimbabwe (Amendment 20) 2013 Chapter 4 Section 60 on Freedom of Conscience).

⁴¹ John A.A. Ayoade, "States without Citizens: An Emerging African Phenomenon," in Richard Bellamy, *Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 16.

⁴² Ibid, p. 17.

Having this as a working definition, I argue that whatever type of citizenship one may want to promote, the element of responsibility is always present. A theorist whose interest is in corporate, global, transnational, multicultural, or environmental citizenship will end up highlighting the underlining factor of responsibility. Bearing in mind the historical background of the development of citizenship theory, this chapter looks at the application of citizenship in Zimbabwe by focusing on two Anglican bishops, Kenneth Skelton and Nolbert Kunonga.

Citizenship in Colonial Rhodesia: Focus on Kenneth Skelton

Kenneth Skelton was Bishop of Matabeleland from 1962-1970.⁴³ He became a bishop during a time that he himself refers to as 'turbulent',⁴⁴. When the Anglican Church 'had a unique relationship with the settlers and the authorities of Southern Rhodesia'.⁴⁵ Anglicanism was not an established church here, although Bishop Skelton recalls having difficulty persuading the Roman Catholic Bishop of Bulawayo of this fact. The Roman Catholic Bishop's position was understandable because the Anglican Church always behaved as though it had a privileged position.

⁴³ Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo, 1986, p. 10; K. Skelton. "Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia: Notes from a Turbulent Octave, 1962-1970," *Mambo Occasional Papers - Missio-Pastoral Series 12*, Gweru: Mambo, 1985; Weller C, *Anglican Centenary in Zimbabwe 1891-1991*, Mutare: Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Limited, 1991; A.J. Chennells, "Anglicans and Roman Catholics before and after Independence," *Zambezia*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1988, pp. 75-86.

⁴⁴ From K. Skelton, *Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia: Notes from a Turbulent Octave, 1962-1970*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1985, p. 152.

⁴⁵ A.J. Chennells, "Anglicans and Roman Catholics before and after Independence," *Zambezia*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1988, pp. 75-86.

It was the church of the various governors and would emerge on state occasions to give its blessing to whatever was going on. The reason for this was that the majority of whites were nominally Anglican, and at those various moments in settler history when the essential Britishness of Rhodesia was being bandied about to show that we were not South Africans, the monarchy's spiritual authority could be located in the Anglican Church as its secular authority was located in the Governor and Assembly. After all, the Anglican cathedral is built next to Parliament and only a lane named 'St Mary's' separates them.

A defining political incident coincided with the consecration of Skelton as bishop of Matabeleland in 1962. Sir Edgar Whitehead, Garfield Todd's successor as Prime Minister of Rhodesia, was defeated by the Rhodesia Front (RF) in December 1962. Whitehead had been committed to racial partnership, while the Rhodesian Front was committed to an undiluted form of white supremacy.⁴⁶

In 1964 Ian Douglas Smith, leader of the RF, became Prime Minister of Rhodesia. There were protracted negotiations between the Governments of Southern Rhodesia and the United Kingdom on the issue of independence which the British government had allegedly promised after the break-up of the Federation.⁴⁷ Taking the direction of Lapsley, this chapter now puts focus on the contributions of two men, namely Bishops Skelton and Alderson during the early days of Smithian Rhodesia.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1986, p. 12.

⁴⁷ The Federation consisted of Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), and Nyasaland (Malawi). In 1964 Malawi and Zambia became independent and the break-up was of no help to African nationalism in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

⁴⁸ Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1986, p. 12.

As the established Church in England and the most important settler church, Anglicanism was peculiarly vulnerable when African nationalism challenged the morality of White supremacy and segregation, when it challenged the ideologies on which settler colonialism was based. The question then arose whether the principal institutions of the Anglican Church were so inscribed with supremacist ideology that even when Anglican leaders opposed the Rhodesia Front, they spoke not for their Black Anglican members but out of a liberal discourse within settler ideology. In other words, was the reaction of leading Anglicans a lived expression of Jürgen Habermas' idea of 'communicative freedom' and 'communicative action' representing the African whose land and other civil liberties had been trumped?⁴⁹

In Salisbury, within the diocese of Mashonaland (now Harare) Bishop Alderson's views on Ian Douglas Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) are to be noted. On 15th November 1965, Bishop Alderson took the main service in the Anglican Cathedral and he made it clear that Smith's claim to be defending Christian values by pronouncing UDI was theologically flawed. This led to protests by hard-liners in the congregation and some staged an immediate demonstration against the Bishop.⁵⁰ In Bulawayo, Bishop Skelton was equally critical of Smith and he even proceeded to the United Nations to mobilize support for majority rule in Rhodesia as well as a condemnation of Smith's UDI. From this it can be deduced that the Anglican Church has since its establishment in Zimbabwe kept a close relationship with the State, albeit a heterogeneous one.

⁴⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, William Rehg (tr.), Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1996, p. 118.

⁵⁰ Carl Fredrik Hallencreutz, *Religion and Politics in Harare 1890-1980*, Uppsala: Swedish Institute of Missionary Research, 1998, p. 405.

The Church during this period was mainly co-opted by the State.⁵¹ The leading voices of dissent to this were more those of isolated opinion-makers who challenged the status quo. Similar sentiments on Church-State relations could be found from the official statements of all the churches at this period, but coming from the Anglican Church it shows how far Anglicanism confirmed the routine contempt with which the British South Africa Company's officials were accustomed to write about the cultures of the people whose land they had occupied.⁵² The Anglican Church was in a position to be the conscience of officialdom and it was not for many years that it made any attempt to accept that responsibility.

Perhaps the strongest indication of how far the Anglican Church almost unconsciously identified with the settlers can be seen in the pattern of residence of expatriate clergy.⁵³ During the early days of the settlement and after 1960 the great majority of clergy stayed here only four or five years.⁵⁴ The proportion of priests staying ten or twenty or more years slowly increased over the years until the uncertainties of the 1960s led most to serve no more than the duration of their initial contracts. Arnold (1985) puts a brave face on this in arguing that it meant that there was always a body of clergy in England or South Africa who knew the needs of the Church in Rhodesia and were willing to help from outside.⁵⁵ A less charitable view of these movements is that the Anglican clergy followed

⁵¹ The term 'co-opted' is derived from Father Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1986.

⁵² A.J. Chennells, "Anglicans and Roman Catholics before and after Independence," *Zambezia*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1988, pp. 75-86.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁵⁴ W.E. Arnold, *Here to Stay: The Story of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe*. Lewes, Sussex: The Book Guild, 1985, p. 33.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

the ordinary patterns of immigration and emigration of the settlers themselves. Most of these stayed a few years and then moved on to South Africa or back to England when the various economic and political crises of the colony's history increased the insecurity of Whites. As with the settlers, a few stayed to become permanent residents⁵⁶. This could be interpreted to mean that the Anglican Church was staffed with people who, whatever their motives for coming here in the first place, soon came to share the anxieties of other Whites about the country's future. If this is indeed what happened, they must have been alienated from Black Anglicans whose interpretations of crises and hopes for the future were necessarily very different from those of the settlers. For the majority of white clergy, the idea of permanently settling in Rhodesia was far from their thoughts. Hence, they saw no need in aligning themselves with the socio-political needs of the blacks whom they ministered to.

These divisions in the Church did not become a public issue until the days of African nationalism that produced an alternative agenda in the early 1960s. This is the period of the episcopacies of Cecil Alderson (Mashonaland), James Hughes (Matabeleland), Kenneth Skelton (successor of Hughes in Matabeleland), and Paul Burrough (successor of Alderson in Mashonaland).

⁵⁶ Arthur Shearly Cripps is an exceptional case who was even given an African name 'Kambandakoto,' meaning 'the one who goes like a poor man, (Broderick, unpublished, p. 127). He lived among the Shona and ate their traditional food. This is illustrated by Cripps' custom of living and travelling, of which he himself writes.... 'the long trudges along easy or broken paths under sun or moon or in moonless dimness. The vague groping among stones or tree stumps in the blackness of a night thunderstorm. The friendly welcome by a Kaffir fire; how fine and delicate of its kind is Kaffir cookery. How much better is Mashona rice than Patna rice; how much more savoury Mashona bean porridge than our tame dishes of beans. What have we to show with all our culinary resources against crisped monkey nuts?'

Bishop Kenneth Skelton: Defender of African Rights

After approximately two years as the bishop of Matabeleland, Kenneth Skelton expressed himself in strong terms against the established white supremacist ideology of racial superiority. In April 1964, when the Rhodesian Front was mooting the idea of unilaterally declaring independence from England, Skelton expressed his views in a sermon:

We who belong to a Church which proclaims its Catholicity, and yet is almost entirely led by Europeans, have we any idea how difficult it is for Africans to be loyal to this Church - which in spite of all its protestations must inevitably seem to justify the title of a 'White Church'?

Opposition to violence, too, which is always, as it has ever been, a principle of Christian behaviour, itself will attract persecution. Where has the patience of so many years got us? They may well be asked. It is clear that moderation will produce nothing! A Church which preaches patience, a Church which holds out the Cross rather than the sword is inevitably, in the tensions of today, exposing its people to persecution.⁵⁷

The bishop's words fit Habermas' contributions to a discourse theory of Law and Democracy. His ability to point out the weakness of the white oppressive system is not only a part of practical responsible citizenship, but also a lived expression of 'communicative freedom.' Communicative freedom "exists only between actors who, adopting a performative attitude, want to reach an understanding with one another to take positions on reciprocally raised validity claims."⁵⁸ He further elaborates his conception of this communicative freedom as the possibility—mutually

⁵⁷ Extracted from an appendix in Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1986. Bishop Skelton preached this sermon in Bulawayo Cathedral on Sunday 19th April 1964.

⁵⁸ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts & Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, William Rehg (tr.), Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1996, p. 118.

presupposed by participants engaged in the effort to reach an understanding—of responding to the utterances of one’s counterpart and to the concomitantly raised validity claims, with aim at inter-subjective recognition. Thus, action or behaviour of a people within a community is guided by an agreed common understanding, reciprocity, and respect of that which has been set up as the standard for the common good. This also implies the suspension of subjective feelings on the part of individuals. Standing as the guideline then, are those principles that are set up by people as thinking agents in a community of equals. Despite the lack of specificity in pointing out that human rights are not the preserve of white people, one notes the close relation between Skelton’s sermon to the conceptualization of rights by Jürgen Habermas’ assertion that “this system should contain precisely the basic rights that citizens must mutually grant one another if they want to legitimately regulate their life in common by means of positive law.”⁵⁹

The other issue raised by Skelton is that he made an allusion to the inevitability of ‘liberative violence,’ which is a re-presentation of the Catholic Church’s traditional view of the ‘Just War’ theory.⁶⁰ He expresses his agony of ‘having a patience that has borne nothing,’ hence his advice that ‘A Church which preaches patience, a Church which holds out the Cross rather than the sword is inevitably, in the tensions of today, exposing its people to persecution’. This is a call to ‘communicative action’ which involves obligations that are suspended by legally protected liberties.⁶¹ It has to do with the suspension of the individual whims and fancies, which

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Canaan Banana, *The Gospel according to the Ghetto*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1990, p. 45.

⁶¹ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, William Rehg (tr.), Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1996, p. 118.

are replaced by that which is *pro bonum commune* (for the common good). For Skelton, because the State claimed to be Christian, it was legitimate for the Church to act as the conscience of the nation, and if the State did not act according to Christian principles it was the Church's role to call it to order.

Furthermore, the words of Kenneth Skelton resonate with John Rawls' concept of citizenship and the rights one is entitled to as a citizen.⁶² My particular interest is on his discussion on "the grounds of civil disobedience in a constitutional democracy."⁶³ He outlines "the conditions under which we may, by civil disobedience, properly oppose legally established democratic authority." Rawls contends that civil disobedience is "a public, non-violent, and conscientious act contrary to law usually done with the intent to bring about a change in the policies or laws of the government. Civil disobedience is a political act in the sense that it is an act justified by moral principles which define a conception of civil society and the public good."⁶⁴

Skelton resigned from the Diocese of Matabeleland in 1970 and returned to Britain. What is noted is that the critical ecclesiastical landscape of the 1960s, notably the period leading to UDI and soon after UDI was dominated by Skelton. In his capacity as the president of the Rhodesia Christian Council, he gave strong leadership to the wider Christian community of Rhodesia. He became a national figure who was often surrounded by controversy. "Skelton undoubtedly had influence in his Church, but he was confronting head on, centuries of systematic and sustained prejudiced notions of a chosen race who certainly would need more than a

⁶² John Rawls, "The Justification of Civil Disobedience," in Aileen Kavanagh & John Oberdiek (eds.), *Arguing about Law*, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2009.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 244.

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 247.

pleading voice ringing from the pulpit.”⁶⁵ He was succeeded by Mark Wood.⁶⁶ Not since the days of Arthur Shearley Cripps, had an Anglican voice been raised so loudly in defence of the rights of the African majority.⁶⁷ There was a mixed reaction to his departure. Many regretted his going, yet many others were relieved. He represented that prophetic brand of theology that was blind to race.⁶⁸ He was against that notion of citizenship which asserted that ‘white is right’ and ‘black is blight.’ He was against that notion of citizenship that promoted privileges for the white minority and oppression for the black majority. The study now takes a new turn as it interrogates the same notion of citizenship during the post-Independent era in Zimbabwe by focusing on the episcopal ministry of Nolbert Kunonga.

Citizenship in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe: Focus on Nolbert Chinembiri Kunonga

Nolbert Chinembiri Kunonga became bishop of the diocese of Harare in 2002, thereby becoming the 10th bishop of this diocese. He became the bishop when Zimbabwe was in its 20th year of attaining political independence from the British colonial system. The early years of his episcopacy were marred by various accusations. The most notable ones were

⁶⁵ C. Banana, *The Gospel according to the Ghetto*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1990, p. 29.

⁶⁶ C. Weller, *Anglican Centenary in Zimbabwe 1891-1991*, Mutare: Zimbabwe Newspapers Ltd., 1991, p. 11.

⁶⁷ Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the independence of Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1986, p. 32.

⁶⁸ G.S. Leonard, *The Kairos Documents*, Durban: Ujamaa Centre for Biblical and Theological Community Development and Research, University of KwaZulu Natal, 2010.

from his rival Timothy Neil whom he controversially pipped in an election for the See of Harare,⁶⁹ and from Robert Stumbles who was a prominent lawyer in Harare and the Chancellor of the Anglican diocese of Harare.

Timothy Neil and Robert Stumbles presented the strongest rejections to Kunonga's election as the bishop of Harare. Apart from doubting his spiritual credentials, they accused Kunonga of being a ZANU-PF cadre whose hate for the whites stemmed from his days as a high school student, a seminarian and later as a young cleric during the late 1970s within the diocese of Mashonaland (now Harare). Of interest in this presentation is the conceptualization of citizenship during the ministration of Kunonga from 2002 up to his political demise in 2012.

Occupying the bishop's seat of the diocese of Harare at a time when government had embarked full-scale on the fast track land redistribution programme which many blame for the socio-economic down spiral and inter-party violence, Kunonga was open about where his loyalties stood. He did not waste time and began to openly support ZANU-PF and especially the land reform, the very programme that was loathed by Neill and white parishioners, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and Western governments. In 2002 Kunonga argued that "the land struggle is a significant part ... for Africans to stand up against the West. They are my own those who identify with justice. They are close to me those who

⁶⁹ The election of Nolbert Kunonga was characterized by controversy; Obvious Vengeyi, "Kunonga Versus Bakare: Zimbabwe's Own Version of Amos versus Priest Amaziah of Israel (Amos 7:10-14)," *BOLESWA, Journal of Theology and Philosophy*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2012, offers some details of what transpired during the elective assembly wherein Kunonga emerged as the winner against Chad Gandiya, Philemon Mudzvovera and Timothy Neil. Despite being a dark horse, Kunonga was viewed as a candidate that was better placed to deal with the racism that Peter Hatendi had failed to overcome during his episcopacy.

identify with correcting the gross imbalances in Zimbabwe”⁷⁰ and on another occasion he attacked MDC as a puppet of the Western powers: “You are sick to think the Western political and economic interests are your interests. They are here to look for puppets to put in Government ignorant African leaders who can easily be manipulated.”⁷¹ Through the fast track land redistribution programme, white-owned farms were redistributed to blacks. To this end, Lapsley notes that almost everyone he spoke to was in support of land redistribution. The objections are to the method that has helped turn a country that was the breadbasket of the region into a begging nation.

Kunonga also supported other policies of the Zanu-PF led government that included empowerment of the formerly marginalized black citizens through promulgation of the indigenization policy which meant expropriation of 51% shares from all foreign-owned businesses. This was the 51/49% policy which commanded that foreign investors had to retain 49% shares of their investment and the remaining 51% were to be shared among indigenous investors. Kunonga also became a regular feature to bless state occasions. How this impacts on notions of citizenship is my focus here.

Comparative Analysis: Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia and Bishop in Mugabe's Zimbabwe

Whilst colonial Zimbabwe was one in which citizenship for the whites meant superiority and many privileges that included, among other things, getting land and driving out indigenous occupants of that land, for the black majority, citizenship in colonial Zimbabwe meant to be treated as

⁷⁰ Obvious Vengeyi, "Kunonga Versus Bakare: Zimbabwe's Own Version of Amos versus Priest Amaziah of Israel (Amos 7:10-14)," *BOLESWA, Journal of Theology and Philosophy*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2012.

⁷¹ Ibid.

an inferior, an object for oppression and disenfranchisement. In post-colonial Zimbabwe, starting from 1980, the then Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, announced a policy of reconciliation as he quoted Isaiah 2:4 in his plea to all the citizens of Zimbabwe to 'turn their swords into plow-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks'.⁷² Experience thereafter reveals that this call was not embraced by all. asserts that within the Anglican Church, whites hardly accepted the leadership of blacks in the church and despite being the Bishop, Peter Hatendi failed to reign in the white congregants of the diocese of Harare.⁷³ Nationally, the reactions of the 1990s present a spirit of wanting to turn the tables in favour of the blacks. This was as if it were a fulfilment of Paulo Freire's words that the idea of being human for the oppressed is to be like the oppressor. As noted by Michael Lapsley in *Redeeming the Past: My Journey from Freedom Fighter to Healer*, Paulo Freire's remark somehow found fulfilment in Zimbabwe. On one hand the white man was not prepared to leave his place of privileges. On the other hand, the black man was getting impatient on when he would occupy that same seat. This created a situation of the victim turning into victimizer.

Frans Verstraelen describes Church-State relations during the various eras of Zimbabwe's history.⁷⁴ He does this by giving a historical and missio-theological perspective. On the precarious state of the State in

⁷² P. Muzambi, "Religion, Citizenship and the State of Zimbabwe: The Politics of Zimbabwe's First Lady Grace Mugabe," in M.C. Green, R.I.J. Hackett, L. Hansen and F. Venter (eds), *Religious Pluralism, Heritage and Social Development in Africa*, Stellenbosch: Conf-RAP, 2017, p. 82.

⁷³ Obvious Vengeyi, "Kunonga versus Bakare: Zimbabwe's Own Version of Prophet Amos versus Priest Amaziah of Israel (Amos 7:10-14)," *BOLESWA Journal of Theology and Philosophy*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2012, pp. 15-41.

⁷⁴ Frans Verstraelen, *Zimbabwean Realities and Christian Responses-Contemporary Aspects of Christianity in Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1998.

Africa, he says, “Unfortunately, in the process of nation-building, the State became more or less coterminous with its leaders, who considered the State as their political earning.”⁷⁵ He cited the words of John A.A. Ayoade, a Nigerian political scientist who quoted the words of a Basuto-land National Party member:

How can we lose the match (the elections)? The ball is ours; the field is ours; the linesmen are ours; and, more important, the referee too, is ours.⁷⁶

Verstraelen contends that what Ayoade explained in football terminology applies to most African countries.⁷⁷ Applying this to this study, a question can be posed: Was the colonial and post-colonial Anglican Church ‘a ball,’ ‘field,’ ‘linesman,’ or ‘referee’ of the State’s programmes? In other words, was the Anglican Church in Harare ‘neutral,’ ‘co-opted,’ or an objective body that prophetically reached out to both the State and the generality?⁷⁸ In order to respond to this, it is pertinent to appeal to the four models of Church-State relations as outlined by Verstraelen:⁷⁹

1. Theocracy, which refers to the State being under the control of religious leaders (e.g. Iran).

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 45.

⁷⁶ John A.A. Ayoade, "States without Citizens: An Emerging African Phenomenon," in Richard Bellamy, *Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 112, quoting M. Khaketla, 1972, 55.

⁷⁷ Frans J. Verstraelen, *Zimbabwean Realities and Christian Responses-Contemporary Aspects of Christianity in Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo, 1998.

⁷⁸ Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1986.

⁷⁹ Frans J. Verstraelen, *Zimbabwean Realities and Christian Responses-Contemporary Aspects of Christianity in Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo, 1998.

2. Erastianism, which refers to the opposite situation, when the State uses religion for its own interests, as was the case in the Roman Empire where Emperor worship was used to strengthen unity and loyalty among its citizens.
3. Separation of Church and State, that is, legally separate but without hostility, as is the case in most Western democracies.
4. Separation of Church and State, but one in which the State takes a negative, unfriendly stance against religion, including Christianity, a situation which applied to most Communist countries.⁸⁰

De Vries addresses the same issues using different terms that also add a little more detail to how we are to understand the co-ordination of religion and politics.⁸¹ He brings forth five elements:

1. As juxtaposition
2. As strict separation
3. Subordination of the political pole to the theological (religious)
4. Subordination of the theological (religious) pole to the political
5. Or interdependence.

Focusing on the topic under review, four attitudes can be discerned. These are:

(1) As in the case of Emperor Constantine, the Church and State should work together in institutionalized co-operation. As highlighted above,

⁸⁰ Ibid, pp. 49-50.

⁸¹ Hant de Vries and Sullivan Lawrence (eds), *Political Theologies Public Religions in a Post-secular World, Countries: Study on South and Southern Africa*, Geneva, International Migration Programme, International Labour Office, Fordham: Fordham University Press, 2006, p. 26.

this was not the case for the Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia.⁸² However, traces of this model are noted in the Bishop in Mugabe's Zimbabwe especially when one considers that for a period covering the years 2002 to 2010, he was a regular delegate to ZANU-PF as well as State functions and in some cases he was the one to bless the proceedings.⁸³

(2) The Church keeps itself distanced from the State and wishes to have as little as possible to do with politics. This is not applicable to both Skelton and Kunonga for they were both active opinion leaders with regards to the politics of the day.

The Church says it has a social responsibility and therefore must mediate between two opposing groups⁸⁴. Zimbabwe of the periods under review was polarized. During Skelton's time, the problem was colonialism and the unwillingness of Smith to give blacks an opportunity to participate in as well as determine the socio-economic and political life of the State. Skelton supplied a voice of dissent to the evils of colonial Rhodesia.

During Kunonga's time the State was polarized by two main political rival parties, that is, the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Kunonga was aligned to ZANU (PF) and did not mince his words when it came to his disdain of the MDC.

⁸² K. Skelton. "Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia: Notes from a Turbulent Octave, 1962-1970," *Mambo Occasional Papers - Missio-Pastoral Series*, 12, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1985.

⁸³ Masiwa Ragies Gunda, "The Reign of Bishop Nolbert Kunonga: Nationalist Spirit or Empire Builder?" *Missionalia*, 36 (2/3), 2008.

⁸⁴ Verstraelen cites the example of Pope Pius XII who tried to mediate during World War II in respect to the genocide of Jews by the Nazi. How the Anglican Church reacted to the then prevailing situation in the post-2000 period in Zimbabwe is the focus of this study.

(3) The Church takes sides by having a preferential option for the poor and oppressed, and demonstrates commitment to liberation before reconciliation.⁸⁵ Skelton definitely qualifies as a conscientious objector. As for Kunonga, opinion is divided. Whilst a few that include Vengeyi view him as a person who has to be judged within the framework of what the politics of the day demanded, namely, taking a stance to finally address the issue of socio-economic imbalances eschewed in favour of the minority whites of Zimbabwe, popular opinion regarded him as an Amaziah of the day who was blindly pro-status quo.⁸⁶

The situation within the post-colonial Anglican diocese of Harare renewed interest in the academic circles in as far as the interaction between religion and politics is concerned. Bertha Chiroro argues that “the church has responded to Zimbabwe’s economic and governance crisis in a subtle manner, but has found itself marginalized and unable to provide leadership among civil society in response to the GPA (Global Political Agreement⁸⁷), with the occasional exception of a few individu-

⁸⁵ Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, New York: Orbis Books, 1973. Gustavo Gutierrez, "A Spirituality of Liberation," In W.D. (ed), *Third World Liberation Theologies - A Reader*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1986; A. Hastings, "Mission, Church and State in Southern African Catholicism: The First 150 Years," in A. Hastings, *African Catholicism: Essays in Discovery*, London: SCM Press, 1989, pp. 167-169 (pp. 156-169).

⁸⁶ Amaziah was a Priest and contemporary of Prophet Amos during the 8th century in Israel. See Obvious Vengeyi, “Kunonga versus Bakare: Zimbabwe’s own Version of ‘Prophet Amos versus Priest Amaziah’ of Israel (Amos 7:10-14),” in *Boleswa Journal of Theology, Religion and Philosophy (BJTRP)*, vol. 3, no. 3, December 2012.

⁸⁷ GPA is an acronym for ‘Global Political Agreement.’ This was a compromise position reached towards the end of 2008 by the three main political parties in Zimbabwe, namely, Robert Mugabe’s ZANU-PF, Morgan Tsvangirai’s MDC-T, and Arthur Mutambara’s MDC-M.

als and organizations who have denounced ZANU-PF authoritarianism”⁸⁸. She further asserts that several churches have taken partisan positions, with senior clerics or their associates directly or indirectly supporting one side over the other. She singled out Nolbert Kunonga who was the bishop of the Anglican diocese of Harare as one such culprit who openly supported ZANU-PF.⁸⁹

Ezra Chitando argues that the most dominant paradigm in interpreting the interface between religion and politics has been to focus on how politicians harness religious ideologies and concepts to serve their own interests.⁹⁰ This is a valid entry point as it facilitates an awareness of the extent to which politicians manipulate religious symbols, concepts and persons to consolidate their grip on power. Alternatively, the focus can shift towards the role of religious leaders in challenging the ruling elite. Narratives may therefore highlight the activities of a specific religious leader (Kadenge 2010), adopt an ecumenical perspective (Gokova 2010), and focus on a selected church (Maxwell 2000) or on the pronouncements of a specific religious body (Gundani 2008).⁹¹ The course that this study took was to focus on a selected church, namely the ministry of two Anglican bishops (Kenneth Skelton and Nolbert Kunonga) in an effort to be specific. The essays in the book edited by Chitando focus on how

⁸⁸ Bertha Chiroro, "Turning Confrontation into Critical Engagement: The Challenges of the Inclusive Government to Zimbabwe's Civil Society," in Brian and Raftopoulos (eds), *The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Harare: Weaver Press, 2013, p. 127.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ezra Chitando (ed), *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, SAPES Books, Harare: 2013, p. vi.

⁹¹ Gokova 2010, Maxwell 2000, Gundani 2008 cited in Ezra Chitando (ed), *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books: 2013, p. vi.

religion and politics interfaced in Zimbabwe with particular concentration on the period 2000 to 2008.⁹² Although this study investigated the same period, it also made a hindsight approach by investigating a colonial period featuring Skelton. This was a way of ‘getting back in order to go forward.’⁹³

Ruzivo states that “Churches were seen as partners in the development of the colony and for many years churches were at the service of the settler regime’s agenda.”⁹⁴ Cecil John Rhodes, though a Freemason, did not exhibit any form of personal attachment to any religion. He promoted close ties between Christianity and the state as seen later in the closeness between the Parliament building and the Anglican Cathedral. He further asserts that the Anglican Cathedral has a leeway which the Bishop would use to enter Parliament to say a prayer before Parliamentary business commenced. Ruzivo argues that this can be seen as performing a ritual of the state’s civil religion, a practice that Kunonga almost succeeded in reviving, especially between the years 2002 and 2010.

Another recent contributor to the religion and politics discourse in Zimbabwe is Tarisayi Andrea Chimuka, who asserts that “the role of

⁹² Ezra Chitando (eds), *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books: 2013.

⁹³ See paper by Ezra Chitando titled "Going Back in Order to Go Forward," presented at Great Zimbabwe University, Dzimbahwe Arts and Culture Festival (DACF) Academic Symposium, Law School, 23 September 2016.

⁹⁴ Munetsi Ruzivo, "Civil Religion in Zimbabwe: Unpacking the Concept," in E. Chitando (ed), *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books, 2013, p. 3.

religion in any society, culture or civilization is complicated,⁹⁵ and society can ignore religion only at its own peril.”⁹⁶ He further argues that religion in one form or another been responsible for an avalanche of social action. In some cases, religion has contributed to social cohesion and peace, while in others it has led to instability and civil wars.⁹⁷ As discussed above, Skelton and Kunonga both actively participated, albeit in different ways, in the life of the Church and the State.

Lovemore Togarasei adds his voice to the interface between religion and politics in Zimbabwe.⁹⁸ He claims that “although some politicians in Zimbabwe advocate for the separation of religion and politics, the history of the country, from pre-colonial to post-colonial periods, has seen a close relationship between the two.” In pre-colonial Zimbabwe, the chiefs were both political and religious figures. In fact, they derived their political power from religion. Colonialism came riding on the back of

⁹⁵ T.A. Chimuka, "Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe: Nascent Foes or Blessed Bed Fellows?" in E. Chitando, *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books, 2013, pp. 19-36.

⁹⁶ T.O. Ranger (1986, p. 5) cited in Ibid.

⁹⁷ Dillan (2003, p. 3) cited in C. T.A. Chimuka, "Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe: Nascent Foes or Blessed Bed Fellows?" in E. Chitando, *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books, 2013, pp. 19-36.

⁹⁸ Lovemore Togarasei, "Pentecostal Churches and Politics in Zimbabwe's turbulent years 2000-2008," in E. Chitando, *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books, 2013, p. 97.

religion, which in this case was Christianity.⁹⁹ Christianity and traditional religion also played key roles in the fight for independence.¹⁰⁰ After independence, the church remained the state's close ally in nation building and development. Togarasei further argues that current church-state relations in Zimbabwe are very complex.¹⁰¹ Thus, besides the multiplicity of religions that have a constitutional right to worship freely in Zimbabwe, Christianity, which has the largest following, is also very much divided both in its practice and doctrine on political involvement.¹⁰² Togarasei says one way of wading through this complexity is to focus on Pentecostal churches during the time Zimbabwe experienced its worst political and economic crises between 2000 and 2008. He did exactly that by looking at the political role (or lack thereof) played by these churches. For this study, focus is on the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe with a focus on the political ministries of Skelton and Kunonga.

Michael Lapsley, an Anglican priest, also presents an account of the role of the Anglican Church leadership during the crucial phase of the Zimbabwean struggle for liberation and nationhood. In *Neutrality or Co-*

⁹⁹ Thomas (1985) cited in Lovemore Togarasei, "Pentecostal Churches and Politics in Zimbabwe's Turbulent Years 2000-2008," in E. Chitando, *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books, 2013, p. 97.

¹⁰⁰ D. Lan, *Guns and Rain: Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*, Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1985; J. McLaughlin, *The Catholic Church and Zimbabwe's War of Liberation 1972-1980*, DPhil, University of Zimbabwe, Harare, 1991.

¹⁰¹ David Maxwell (2000) cited in Togarasei Lovemore, "Pentecostal Churches and Politics in Zimbabwe's Turbulent Years 2000-2008," in E. Chitando, *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books, 2013, p. 97.

¹⁰² Cf. *Constitution of Zimbabwe*, Amendment no. 20, Act 2013, Article 60.

*Option?*¹⁰³ he shows the extent to which white control of both the state apparatus and Church politics was entrenched, so much so that even the most liberal white missionary ended up a captive of racial prejudice. Dean da Costa is an example. Initially, he did not want to be associated with the regime of Ian Douglas Smith. However, his sermon preached for those who died in the Viscount Aircraft in the then Salisbury Anglican Cathedral on Friday, 8th September 1978 changed things. This was a sermon preached in response to the pain emanating from the loss of life after a plane crash. The Air Rhodesia Viscount was shot down by ZIPRA forces and even the survivors were killed. According to C.S. Banana, the statement (of Dean da Costa) smacked of bitter irony as history and experience reveals so poignantly, the Smith regime was willing to expend countless black lives for the preservation of white supremacy in Zimbabwe. It is somewhat of a bitter pill to swallow that the Dean thought that the wellbeing of the State of Zimbabwe lay with capitalism and its dubious and nefarious custodians, that is, the whites. In reading his reaction, one wonders if the sad fact that he had been in the country for only two years prevented him from reading the political barometer correctly.¹⁰⁴

Another scholar whose attention was on the Anglican diocese of Harare is Masiwa Ragies Gunda as he assessed the reign of Bishop Nolbert Kunonga.¹⁰⁵ He probed the motives of Nolbert Kunonga as he gauged whether they were emanating from a nationalist spirit or rather from the

¹⁰³ Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1986.

¹⁰⁴ Foreword by Canaan Banana in Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1986, pp. 6-8.

¹⁰⁵ Masiwa Ragies Gunda, "The Reign of Bishop Nolbert Kunonga: Nationalist Spirit or Empire Builder?" *Missionalia*, 36 (2/3), 2008.

ambition to build his own empire.¹⁰⁶ The researcher argues that even though Nolbert Kunonga was an outstanding figure of the church politics of the day, there is need to focus on other influencing factors that made the situation to be what it was during the years 2008-2013. Gunda labelled Kunonga as a bishop bent on building his own kingdom within the Anglican Church at the expense of standing for the rights of the generality of citizens. A different opinion to this is in the voice of Obvious Vengeyi (2012) who avers that Kunonga's actions are justifiable since he saw the need to take an affirmative action to decisively deal with the contentious land issue in Zimbabwe as well as empowerment of the disenfranchised majority blacks who for a long time had been on the sidelines of mainstream socio-economic life of the Zimbabwean state.¹⁰⁷

Conclusion

It has been highlighted that citizenship entails having social, economic and political rights as well as the entitlement to actively participate in the life of a State if a State is to be deemed democratic. Colonial Rhodesia denied the majority blacks from participating in the socio-economic and political activities of the State. A leaf on what theology and theologians ought to do can be plucked from Kenneth Skelton who prophetically stood as a bulwark against excesses of Smith's Rhodesian State. In as far as parallels between Skelton and Kunonga are concerned, they can be considered as soul-mates with regards to fearless expression of their opinion. Antagonism between the two is noted on the issue of being anti-status quo (Skelton) and pro-status quo (Kunonga). Africa in general and the Southern African region in particular needs a theology that continues

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *Missionalia* 36 (2/3), pp. 299-318.

¹⁰⁷ Obvious Vengeyi, "Kunonga versus Bakare: Zimbabwe's Own Version of Prophet Amos versus Priest Amaziah of Israel (Amos 7:10-14)," *BOLESWA Journal of Theology and Philosophy*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2012, pp. 15-41.

to prophetically address contemporary issues for political reconstruction and participation in development. This constitutes responsible citizenship.

Chapter 5

“You Are to Love the Foreigner”: Exploring the Benefits of Migration, Citizenship and Religion for Development in Southern Africa

Edwin Zulu

Introduction

The Southern Africa region has a unique scenario. Most populations are connected through culture or tribes. The colonial divisions of the countries in some cases separated people of the same tribes¹. For example, the Tonga of Zambia and of Zimbabwe were separated by these artificial borders. Most of these people lived side by side centuries before the colonial divisions of the nations. They had been trading together; they shared similar religions and similar cultures over the centuries until the colonial government came in and created borders separating people economically, socially and religiously.

In addition, even after the borders were created, there were many migrations between these countries. People made movements for trade, religion or for work.

Therefore, the general pattern is that today, in all these countries, there are nationals, descendants of other countries of Southern Africa residing

¹ The Chewa speaking people are found in Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, whilst the Tonga of the Valley are found both in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

there legally and illegally. In some instances, they have been integrated into the local populations so much that it would be impossible to dislodge them. These movements have continued to take place on every day basis. These movements and settlements have benefited the host countries economically and socially. For example, those of the Diaspora send home huge sums of money each year legally. This is in addition to the millions of Dollars sent back home through informal ways.

However, despite the integration in the region, there have been constant xenophobic attacks on these foreigners in their lands of settlement. Many reasons are given for such attacks: foreigners take our jobs; our women, our resources, or they bring in crime, diseases, and so forth.

The Bible in the Old Testament gives a positive view of foreigners and they are appreciated for their role in the development of a nation. The Bible further warns that anyone can be a foreigner in one way or another (Leviticus 19:33-34; Deuteronomy 27:19; Ezekiel 47:22; Zechariah 7:9-10).²

This chapter aims at bringing out biblical perspectives that would assist in interpreting the situation and possibly create an avenue through which foreigners would be appreciated in their land of settlement, work and trade.

The first part is a general introduction about the topic and how it is addressed in the chapter. The second part gives a general overview of the concept of foreigner and how it is defined in various contexts and in this chapter. The third part gives an exegetical exposition of the passages in the Old Testament that deal with the foreigner motif. It also gives reasons

² We need to acknowledge that there are about 42 verses in the Old Testament that speak of the foreigner. Some of them are; Deuteronomy 10:14-19, Exodus 22:21, Deuteronomy 23.7, Ezekiel 47:22-23. The author is aware that there are many texts in the Old Testament dealing with immigrants and refugees.

the foreigners were to be treated fairly among the Israelites. The fourth part is an examination of foreigners, migration, region and development in Southern Africa. The section makes a description of the complex nature of the integration and interdependence of the region. It demonstrates that the region is so much connected and knitted together socially, economically, culturally and religiously and would be impossible to dislodge. The fifth section gives biblical and theological responses to the issue of migration, citizenship and development. The last part draws some conclusions on the topic discussed.

Biblical Perspectives on the Foreigner

There are various definitions of a foreigner that are used in different contexts. Politically, a foreigner maybe defined as someone who has abode in another country either temporarily or permanently. This may be due to a number of factors contributing to this decision to take residence in another country. It may be due to political reasons, personal reasons or due to conflict in the home country.

The Bible defines the foreigner as one who is not of your own kind (tribe) ethnically and who is found in your midst due to various factors (war, marriage, alliances, etc). These are persons who were either enemies of the people like the Ammonites or friendly forces such as the Edomites or Egyptians.

In all, we can say that the foreigner is a person who has found abode amidst other people who are not of his ethnicity for various reasons.

Narratives of Migration in the Old Testament

The Old Testament gives several narratives of migration among God's people, especially in the books of Genesis, Ruth, and Joshua.

In Genesis, Israel is depicted as a tribe in crisis due to hunger in their land; consequently, this tribe finds itself in Egypt initially to run away from hunger. The narratives also speak of a miraculous way in which God had beforehand sent Joseph to Egypt, though under circumstances which were not good. He was sold as a slave by his brothers. But when he went to live in Egypt, he later became the Prime Minister in the land and was able to save his people from hunger. Eventually, the whole family migrated to Egypt.

After many generations, new rulers came who did not know Joseph. The new rulers implemented punitive ways on the Israelites. This led to the Exodus to the Promised Land.

In these travels to the Promised Land, the Israelites who were accompanied by other people, met and fought many tribes until they eventually settled in the Promised Land as recorded in Joshua 24.

There are various texts that speak of the foreigners in the Old Testament. In this section, I discuss a few of them.

Exegesis of Deuteronomy 10:14-19

And you are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt.³

In this text, the primary concern is with the Israelites' behaviour towards God and their attitude to the foreigner.⁴ This behaviour is motivated by

³ Hebrew verb, and "you (sg) shall love" occurs four times in the Old Testament: Deut 6:5 and 10:1 (the Lord your God); Lev 19:18 (your neighbour) 19:34 (the alien). This verse (Deut 10:19) is the only occurrence of the plural form "and you (pl) shall love," and it reinforces Lev 19:34 (C. Wright, *Deuteronomy*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996).

⁴ A.D.H. Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971, p. 211.

the greatness of God which He has demonstrated through his character and action in His relationship with the Israelites.

God is love, so to *walk* in God's way will entail the exercise and practice of love.⁵

Wright further urges:

The ways of Yahweh in verses 14-19 begin with the condescending love for the ancestors of Israel and climax in practical love for the strangers, the aliens. In between two all-embracing dimensions of Yahweh's love are sandwiched impartiality, integrity, and commitment to Justice" In short, just as God loved them, they should also remember to extend the same love to others who find themselves in their midst due to various circumstances.⁶

This context is a clear demonstration of the implications for the people on the character of God. "God had a particular concern that those in the community whose social and economic status was not secure should receive just and proper treatment,"⁷ so that "the impartiality of God is shown in His love for the alien, a person within the community who did not share full civil and religious rights with the Israelites."⁸

In a related text Deuteronomy 23:7-8⁹ the perspective is expanded. In this text there is a command that the Israelites need to treat the foreigner

⁵ C. Wright, *Deuteronomy*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, p. 151.

⁶ Ibid, p. 150.

⁷ P.C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, p. 206.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ "Do not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. Do not abhor an Egyptian, because you lived as an alien in his country. The third generation of children born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD" (NIV).

well and with respect. The term abhor (ta'ab) may mean "to treat as unclean from a cultic point of view."¹⁰

There are various reasons given by different scholars as to why this command was given. According to Mayes, this command to treat the Edomites as a brother relates to history.¹¹ It may relate to the vassal treaties and specifically to the subjugation of Edom to vassaldom by David (2 Sam 8:13ff). The word 'brother' in Akkadian is also used as a technical term for a treaty partner. Therefore, it is the view of Mayes that the term here may have had a background in that arrangement.¹² In addition, Edom and her people showed hospitality to the family of Elimelech and Naomi in their need and distress.

The command not to treat the Egyptians harshly may also be related to a long history in which the Israelites were saved by the Egyptians from the famine when they were invited to go and settle in Egypt during the time of Joseph, and that "the reason for accepting an Egyptian takes no account of the period spent in Egypt as a time of hardship and slavery."¹³

Therefore "the claims of kinship (Edomites) and hospitality (Egypt) allowed the grandchildren of resident aliens from these nationalities to be included in the covenant community (v. 8)."¹⁴

For this reason,

If either Edomites or Egyptian took residence in Israel, then the children of the third generation of immigrants could be granted admission to the assembly of the Lord. After the lapse of three generations there would be no doubt that the Edomites and Egyptians resident in Israel were

¹⁰ A.D.H. Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971, pp. 317-318.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 317.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

¹⁴ C. Wright, *Deuteronomy*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996, p. 245.

genuine in their desire to become full members of the worshipping family of God.”¹⁵

Foreigners, Migration, Religion and Development in Southern Africa

Realities in the Region

The Socio-economic Situation

The Southern Africa region is an integrated region in terms of socio-economic aspects. Given the way the region is organized, most of the areas will need to connect with each other either for movement or for trade. All of them belong to organizations such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)¹⁶ and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)¹⁷, which seek to integrate the region economically.

The Political Situation in the Region

Most of these countries have been connected politically in many ways. One of the ways most of the nations were connected was during the struggle for independence. These countries were in the forefront in the Liber-

¹⁵ P.C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, p. 298.

¹⁶ This organization was established on December 8, 1994. It has 19 member states which include the Southern Africa nations that are the subject of this study namely: Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

¹⁷ This organization was established on 1992. It has 15 member states which include the Southern Africa nations that are subject of this study namely: Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

ation struggle, when many political refugees were hosted by these countries. Many of these countries played host to persons running away from conflicts due to the liberation wars.

It needs to be stated also that there have been many bilateral agreements signed among them aimed at politically integrating the region, for example the *SADC Protocol on Trade*, aiming to promote trade cooperation that will benefit the region.

Connectedness of the Region through Culture and Language

When the borders were shared between these nations, tribes were separated who belonged to each other. However, despite the colonial divisions of the countries, they share similar cultures, customs and in some instances speak the same language. For example, Chewa is spoken in Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Certain cultural practices such as the Nyau cult are practiced in these countries as well. Furthermore, some tribes are connected to each other in their lineage. For example, Chief Mpezeni of the Ngoni of Zambia shares the same lineage with Chief Mbelwa of Malawi. We need to add that the Tonga people are found both in Zambia and Zimbabwe. With the construction of the Kariba Dam, the two ethnic groups were separated.

Moving Work Force and Traders

Miners (Wenela)

There has always been a movement of work force between these countries long before their independence. Due to the demand for labour to work in the mines, many people travelled from one country to the other in search of employment. One of the most visible movements was done by an organization called Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) in the 1970s, which came to be known as *Wenela*. Through this organization, single male miners were recruited from Malawi, Zambia

and Zimbabwe to work in the mines of South Africa. These organizations had their own depots, buses and airplanes spread over the region - Basutoland (Botswana), Swaziland (Eswatini), South West Africa (Namibia), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Nyasaland (Malawi), Angola, Mozambique. It even extended to the Belgian Congo (Democratic Republic of Congo) and Tanganyika (Tanzania).¹⁸

The movement of skilled personnel has been occurring in these countries on a daily basis. There is no country in this region which has no foreign workers from the region.

Informal Sector - Casual Workers

The informal sectors play a significant role in the development of any nation. Most of the immigrants in these countries bring in various skills. Since this sector is not effectively regulated, there are many people working in this sector as casual workers.

Persons Working for International Companies and Governments

There are also a number of persons working legally in these countries in various sectors. Some sectors are regional organizations. For example, the Zambezi River Authority. This is an organization charged with the sustainable management of the water bodies of the Zambezi River; it is run jointly by Zimbabwe and Zambia. In addition, there are persons working for embassies which are found in these host countries in Southern Africa and for international organizations.

¹⁸ Wenela Air Service Pty Ltd Botswana (1952-1975), www.worldhistory.biz [25.9.2017].

Cross Border Traders, both Women and Men

There are a lot of informal traders selling different merchandise across borders on daily basis. In some instances, these cross-border traders transport goods from their own countries to a country where they intend to sell their products. After selling off their products, they in turn buy other items which they take back to their countries of origin to sell.

Prophets, Pastors, Witch Doctors

There are many similarities in African traditional religions, because of commonalities in tribes, customs, traditions and even languages. In addition, Christianity has also been widespread in the region; this has led to a new trend in which there has been a number of religion peddlers (prophets, pastors, witch doctors) who are moving within the region across borders to promote their faith.

Students

The region has for a long time been having students in various disciplines. These also contribute to the body of knowledge and spend money for tuition and living expenses.

Summary

Some of the foreigners have taken up citizenship or permanent residence in the host countries, and we find in our midst foreigners staying among us whether legally or illegally, for many different reasons.¹⁹ These foreigners contribute a lot to a number of sectors of the host countries such as education, health, trade, the economy, culture and politics. The

¹⁹ For example, in 2013, the Southern Africa region recorded over 4 million migrants. These exclude the illegal migrants. International Organization of Migration, www.iom.int/southern-africa [25.9.2017].

contribution is huge in that not one of these countries can do without them.

These foreigners, apart from the skills and money brought to the host countries, send huge sums of money to their countries of origin that contribute to the economy of their home countries. For example, in 2015 remittances received in Zambia were 0.27% of the GDP translating into 58.3 Million Dollars. Remittances sent were 0.9% of the GDP translating into 19.1 Million Dollars. During the same period Malawi remittances received were 0.60% of GDP translating into 38.5 Million Dollars, while remittances sent amounted to 0.69% of the GDP translating into 44.1 Million Dollars.²⁰ This is apart from the huge sums sent through unaccountable methods and the goods brought into the countries.

However, despite the above reality many migrant foreigners, both political and economic refugees in some Southern African countries, have experienced rejection, ridicule, persecution and an infringement on their basic human rights. Experiences of the foreigners in the region have therefore been both of welcome and rejection.

Biblical and Theological Responses to Migration, Citizenship and Development

The Old Testament urges for a favourable place and acceptance of the foreigner (Deuteronomy). It emphatically says that you are to 'love the foreigner' for various reasons. In addition, in various texts the Old Testament has indicated the participation and contribution of the 'foreigners' in various developmental works.

An exegetical analysis of these texts could form a basis on which a better understanding of the foreigner and their significance can transform

²⁰ "Zambia-Migrant Remittances," <https://countryeconomy.com/demography/migration/remittance/zambia> [25.9.2017].

negative perceptions, rejection, persecution, and ridicule prevalent in the region.

We are therefore called to consider the following:

We need to consider the foreigner as a brother and a sister in the Lord, not as an enemy. This is due to the complex connection that exists in the region due to our past that cannot be dismantled.

We need to consider the foreigner as a contributor to the socio-economic development of the nation.

We need to treat the foreigner with hospitality and reciprocal care since almost all countries have been hosted by the other country for various reasons noted in this chapter.

We do not need to despise the foreigner as they are also the object of the love of God just like us.

Chapter 6

Women, Migration and Development: Lessons from the Gutsy Strangers of the Book of Ruth

Mmapula Diana Kebaneilwe

Introduction

This chapter aims to explore issues of migration, women and development. Importantly, it seeks to investigate the said issues in the light of the narrative of the Book of Ruth in the Hebrew Bible. As previous studies show, the Bible plays an important role in the lives of many people. In Africa, for instance, many hold the bible with awe as an authoritative and authentic text that is not only seen as a blue print to life but as capable of providing answers to life's existential questions. Therefore, reading the Book of Ruth with the aim of finding out if and how it might help with perspectives on the contemporary issues of migration and development as well as how women have been caught in the intersection of the two, is a fitting exercise. Many will agree that population mobility across the world is a serious cause for concern, in the 21st first century more than ever before. African countries are under pressure due to political instability, economic crisis and civil wars etc, and these have led to massive movement, nationally, within the African continent and internationally beyond Africa. The International Organization for Migration (IOM-2010) indicates that there are many challenges facing migration management including smuggling and trafficking of people across borders, combating xenophobia and integrating migrants, efficient border management, lack of reliable migration data and statistics etc.

Furthermore, studies reveal that recently governments, policy makers and scholars have shown remarkable interest on issues of migration and development. The aim of this paper is threefold: (1) Can the biblical character Ruth teach women migrants some Lessons for Survival in Foreign Lands? (2) Can/do women migrants contribute to development and (3) conclusions. The chapter will begin with a summary of the biblical story of Ruth. The said exercise is deemed necessary to set the stage for this paper. We shall then briefly explore the migration situation in Southern Africa, especially with regard to women migrants before investigating whether the story of Ruth as a female migrant could offer any lessons to women migrants in Southern Africa today.

A Biblical Story of Migration: Ruth 1-4

The narrative of Ruth begins with a family whose country is experiencing famine and hence the family is forced to migrate in search of a better livelihood. The family comprises of a married couple, Elimelech and Naomi, and their two sons Mahlon and Kilion. The family relocates from their country of Bethlehem to Moab. When in Moab, the sons marry local girls, namely Ruth and Orpah. Then a tragedy struck the migrant family when all the men that is Elimelech, Mahlon and Kilion died. The text does not disclose the cause of their deaths. However, we are told that only Naomi and her daughters-in-law survive and that none of the daughters had a child. Naomi, Ruth and Orpah are described as childless widows in need of protection.

As the story unfolds, Naomi decides to go back home to Bethlehem and her daughters-in-law decide to accompany her. She however dissuades them from going with her and Orpah gives in and remains behind in her homeland of Moab while Ruth pledges to stick with Naomi wherever she goes. Ruth pledges to forsake everything to be with her mother-in-law Naomi, and both head to Bethlehem. In Bethlehem, Ruth must find some means of survival and she goes out to glean after the reapers in the fields

as was the norm. While there she finds favour through her hard work and by coincidence. She is introduced to Boaz, who happens to be one of the kinsmen of Naomi's late husband Elimelech. Boaz takes interest in her and finally becomes her redeemer as was the cultural tradition of ancient Israel and they marry and have a son, Obed. Ruth becomes a great grandmother of Jesus and has her name in the genealogy of David.

Migration in Southern Africa

Southern Africa has a long history of migration dating back to the mid-nineteenth century.¹ It is further stated that migration become a tool that tied together the colonies and countries of sub-Saharan Africa into a single labour market in the 20th century.² Still the end of apartheid in Southern Africa opened new opportunities for internal and cross-border movements as well as new dynamics and incentives for migration.³ Today Southern Africa is said to be a region on the move.⁴ The situation has been acutely expressed by Arjan de Haan, in the following sentiments:

Southern Africa equally has been marked by high rates of population mobility and colonial and Apartheid policies have strongly determined movements. In the 1980s, women were estimated to constitute 65 per cent of Zambia's rural population, as an indication of rates of male out-migration. In rural Botswana at the end of the 1970s, one-third of adult

¹ Jonathan Crush, V. Williams and S. Peberdy, "Migration in Southern Africa," A paper prepared for the Policy Analysis and Research Programme of the Global Commission on International Migration, 2005, p. 1.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

males and one-quarter of adult females were absent. 8 per cent of Lesotho's 1980 population was estimated to have migrated to South Africa, and 13 per cent of its 1986 population was registered as absent."⁵

Many factors continue to contribute to the massive mobility not only within Southern Africa but globally. One of these factors is globalization, which has made the entire world a global village. The region's connection with the rest of the world through mass media channels such as face book, twitter and others, which connect people across cultures and transcend geographical boundaries has further opened up new forms of migration. Declining socio-economic conditions in different countries and regions including unemployment have forced and continue to force people out of their comfort zones in search of greener pastures.⁶ As noted by some scholars skilled labour migration has long been a concern for many countries.⁷ Developing countries are reported to be the ones supplying skilled labour while developed countries are mainly the receiving ones.⁸ In Southern Africa, South Africa has a long standing history of migrant workers, especially mine workers from all over Southern Africa. For instance, a migration survey was conducted by the Southern African Migration Project in Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho,

⁵ A. de Haan, "Migrants, Livelihoods and Rights: The Relevance of Migration in Development Policies," *Social Development Working Paper*, no. 4, 2000, p. 17.

⁶ J. Crush, V. Williams and S. Peberdy, "Migration in Southern Africa," A paper prepared for the Policy Analysis and Research Programme of the Global Commission on International Migration, 2005.

⁷ H. Bhorat, J.B. Meyer, and C. Mlatsheni, *Skilled Labour Migration from Developing Countries: Study on South and Southern Africa*, Geneva: International Migration Programme, International Labour office, 2002.

⁸ Ibid.

Mozambique and Namibia in 2002, trying to assess the labour migration experience of adults in each country, yielding the following results:⁹

	Botswana	Lesotho	Mozambique	Namibia
Has personally visited SA	40	81	29	38
Parents worked in SA	41	83	54	26
Grand Parents worked in SA	26	72	38	23

The above table indicates that there was considerable labour migration from other countries in the Southern region to South Africa. My own experience is that, when growing up, many of our men in Botswana worked in South African mines as unskilled migrant workers.¹⁰ However, it is worth noting that the labour mobility was even then not relegated to men alone but that women also moved in search of jobs in SA. Most of the women worked as house maids and nannies, especially for white South African households.

⁹ J. Crush, V. Williams and S. Peberdy, "Migration in Southern Africa," A paper prepared for the Policy Analysis and Research Programme of the Global Commission on International Migration, 2005.

¹⁰ M.D. Kebaneilwe, *This Courageous Woman: A Socio-rhetorical Womanist Reading of Proverbs 31: 10-31*, PhD, Murdoch University, 2012.

Women's Experiences of Migration: Pros and Cons

Research shows that women's migration is on the increase when compared to men's.¹¹

Globally, the number of female migrants was estimated at 94.5 million (or 49.6 per cent of the total) in 2005. The share of women among migrants in Southern countries was about 38.9 million (or 51 per cent) in 2005, compared to 46.2 million (or 51 per cent) in the high-income countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and 8.7 million (or 40 per cent) in the high-income, non-OECD countries.¹²

The provision of care in its myriad forms underlies much female migration. Thus, large numbers of female migrants move to provide care in a range of contexts and sites. They find employment as domestic workers and as care professionals, such as senior carers, nurses and social workers, and facilitate the care of children, adults, disabled and elderly within households, in residential homes and hospitals. Women also move for other reasons – as family migrants, petty traders, agricultural workers etc.¹³

The situation expressed above captures what happens with regard to women and migration in our region. One may recall what happened a few decades ago, when nurses, mostly female, migrated to the UK to go and render their nursing services there. Most of those who left were

¹¹ A. de Haan, "Migrants, Livelihoods and Rights: The Relevance of Migration in Development Policies," 2000.

¹² D. Ratha and W. Shaw, "South-South Migration and Remittances," Working Paper no. 102, Washington, DC: World Bank, 2007.

¹³ E. Kofman and P. Raghuram, "The Implications of Migration for Gender and Care Regimes in the South," in *South-South Migration*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

employed as carers in nursing homes for the aged and people living with disabilities.

Migration is usually seen as problematic, often as the consequence of ruptures, economic exploitation, political or civil tensions and violence.¹⁴ Furthermore, migration is also often blamed for causing problems including social and political instability, environmental degradation, increasing lawlessness or declining law and order etc, but there is no direct link between migration and such ills, though there are manifestations of such problems. It is argued that migration may have its pros and cons, we should try and appreciate the positive factors that accompany migration.¹⁵

In this part of the paper, I endeavour to explore some of the experiences of women, especially Southern African women's experiences with regards to migration. I will discuss some of the reasons that make women migrate from their places of origin, some of the factors that affect them as they move to otherwise unfamiliar contexts away from their homes including the negatives and the positives that result from such shifts.

Silvia Pedraza maintains that despite the overwhelming presence of women in migration flows, the role of women in migration has, until recently, been neglected.¹⁶ Similar sentiments have been expressed by yet other scholars who maintain that

In the 1960s and early 1970s, the phrase migrants and their families was a code for male migrants and their wives and children. The women's movement, however, with its emphasis on the situation of women, caused some to question the near-invisibility of women as migrants,

¹⁴ A. de Haan, "Migrants, Livelihoods and Rights: The Relevance of Migration in Development Policies," 2000.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ S. Pedraza, "Women and Migration: The Social Consequences of Gender," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 17(1), 1991, p. 303.

their presumed passivity in the migration process, and their assumed place in the home.”¹⁷

The common understanding by the above-mentioned scholars is that the assumption is usually that the international migrant is a young, economically motivated male. Contrary to such an assumption is that migration is quite complex and has many dynamics and may not be reasonably assigned to one gender. Thus, understanding the gender matrix is critical in migration partly because migration theory traditionally failed to adequately address or incorporate gender specific experiences of migration.¹⁸ As already mentioned, women’s experiences of migration have been sidelined until recently.

Ultimately, the present century has seen a dramatic change in the way of life of many Africans and women have not been left behind as they too have moved to towns in search of better livelihoods. For example, in Botswana, perhaps like in many sub-Saharan African societies, rural-urban migration is a thing done by everyone, men and women, young and old.¹⁹ Therefore, the issue of women migration cannot be ignored as it is equally critical and practically visible. Nonetheless, the point I wish to pursue in this chapter is how women in Southern Africa have been affected by migration, whether internally within their countries of birth,

¹⁷ M. Boyd and E. Grieco, “Women and Migration: Incorporating Gender into International Migration Theory,” *Migration Information Source*, 1(35), 2003, p. 28.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ P. Ntseane, “Being a Female Entrepreneur in Botswana: Cultures, Values, Strategies for Success, Gender and Development,” 12(2), 2004; L. Daniels, “Micro and Small-Scale Enterprises in Botswana: Results of a Nation-wide Survey,” US Agency for International Development (USAID) Micro Investment and Institutions (GEMINI) Project, Gaborone: USAID, 1992.

regionally within Southern Africa and all of Africa or internationally to Western countries.

Research shows that many African women, including those in Southern Africa, migrate to towns and try to make a living there. In Botswana, many, if not most of these women, resort to working as house maids and or nannies. Others engage in traditional small and micro enterprises, seem to dominate the informal business sector, small micro businesses which include street vending, buying and selling second hand clothing, or catering and selling cooked meals by the roadside.²⁰

With reference to Zimbabwean women, Ezra Chitando maintains that due to the declining socio-economic conditions of Zimbabwe, women have resorted to cross-border trading.²¹ Some have ended up in South Africa and others in Botswana, and yet some have gone even as far as Dubai, the United Kingdom and other places. Chitando further argues that in these foreign contexts, the women's vulnerability to rape is increased by virtue of being "outsiders."²² Labels of "prostitute," "loose and dangerous woman" accompany these brave women in temporary economic migration. Still, some men in host countries have taken advantage of some of these women. I am convinced that the ills that are experienced by migrant women cannot be overemphasized.

²⁰ M.R. Gobagoba and M.A. Littrel, "Profiling Micro Apparel Enterprises in Botswana: Motivations, Practices, Challenges and Success," *Clothing and Textile Research Journal*, 21(3), 2003.

²¹ Ezra Chitando, "'The Good Wife': A Phenomenological Re-Reading of Proverbs 31:10-31 in the Context of HIV/Aids in Zimbabwe," *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, 86, 2004.

²² Ibid.

Can Ruth teach Women Migrants some Lessons for Survival in Foreign Lands?

As already mentioned earlier in this chapter, women are also involved in migration throughout the world. Migrants face multiple challenges and importantly women migrants may be presented with challenges that do not necessarily face their male counterparts. In this part of the chapter, we shall pay attention to the female migrants in the biblical book of Ruth, namely Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi. We intend to explore some of the challenges that the two women face and how as female migrants their story might provide insightful lessons and or give courage to contemporary women in Southern African contexts who find themselves in similar situations. It is necessary to note here that the character of Ruth is meant to be the main focus for this study given that, though the story is dominated by both her and Naomi and it is the former who seems to experience issues of foreignness, but Ruth's life unfolds as she enters the foreign land of Israel while the story is obscure about the details of Naomi's life while she was in Moab, except that death wipes off all the men in her life, forcing her to return home.

Carolyn Custis James observes tellingly that the story of Naomi and Ruth takes place against the backdrop of a patriarchal culture.²³ The same is true of African contexts and cultures as revealed by previous research.²⁴ It suffices to say that Ruth's experiences as a foreigner in the patriarchal context of ancient Israel may to some extent echo those of African

²³ Carolyn Custis James, *The Gospel of Ruth: Loving God enough to Break the Rules*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008.

²⁴ Cf. Mercy A. Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1995; M.D. Kebaneilwe, "The Vashti Paradigm: Resistance as a Strategy for Combating HIV/AIDS," *The Ecumenical Review (ER)*, 63/4, 2011.

women today, especially given the similarities in both cultures as patriarchal. The question is how Ruth was going to survive being a widowed, sonless woman foreigner in a world that “ascribed value to women on their relationships to men.”²⁵ What are some of the challenges that she faces and what are some of the strategies that she employed in order to maximize her chances of survival in such an unfriendly environment?

Some Challenges Faced by Ruth in the Foreign Land

The text of Ruth lays bare some of the challenges that she and Naomi face as they enter Bethlehem in Israel from Moab. Ruth’s challenges are doubled by the fact that she is a foreigner in the first place, while Naomi is a native returning home. Some of her challenges include the following:

A Not One of Us Treatment from the Locals: Spelt out Foreigner identity

We gather that as she and Naomi enter Bethlehem, immediately she assumes a new identity “Ruth the Moabitess.” This is going to be her identity for as long as she decides to make Bethlehem her home.²⁶ Throughout there is emphasis on her Moabite ethnicity.²⁷ The persistent emphasis on Ruth’s foreignness echoes other biblical narratives about Moab which are accentuated and marked by scandal and animosity.²⁸

²⁵ C.C. James, *The Gospel of Ruth: Loving God Enough to Break the Rules*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008.

²⁶ Cf. Ruth 1:22; 2:2, 6, 21; 4:5, 10.

²⁷ E.P. Lee, “Ruth the Moabite: Identity, Kinship and Otherness.” in Linda Day et al (eds), *Engaging the Bible in a Gendered World: An Introduction to Feminist Biblical Interpretations in Honor of Katherine Doob Sakenfeld*, Louisville: Westminster Press, 2006, p. 90.

²⁸ M.D. Kebaneilwe, *This Courageous Woman: A Socio-Rhetorical Womanist Reading of Proverbs 31:10-31*, PhD, Murdoch University, 2012, p. 147. Eunna P. Lee, “Ruth the Moabite: Identity, Kinship and Otherness,” in Linda Day et al

Thus, Moabite women were known for seducing Israelite men and leading them to religious apostasy.²⁹ This is the context within which Ruth is yet to plod her way through following her decision to migrate to Israel. Reality reveals that her experiences resonate with contemporary experiences of many who cross borders as migrants including women from Southern Africa. For instance, in Botswana there is a label for foreigners, namely, *makwerekwere*, a pseudo name that more than all else spells out the 'not-one-of-us' attitude towards especially black migrants, except for those from Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland. The etymology of the term *makwerekwere* may have evolved from the idea that African accents other than those from the three countries mentioned in the preceding sentence seem quite audible to a Motswana ear as non-Tswana. Whatever the case, the point is that once we label others as such, there can be connotations of suspicion, sometimes hatred and of course at other times the term may have a non-wicked meaning. There is an increased awareness and distinction between 'locals' and 'foreigners' in Botswana with emphasis on opportunities and economic entitlements.³⁰

Still, such issues are what foreigners have to live with as long as they make Botswana their home for whatever reason. Women migrants have experienced such treatments as well and this is not peculiar to Botswana but perhaps true all across the globe. The question is, is it okay to put labels on the 'other' simply because they are not in their own country of

(eds), *Engaging the Bible in a Gendered World: An Introduction to Feminist Biblical Interpretations in Honor of Katherine Doob Sakenfeld*, Louisville: Westminster Press, 2006, p. 90.

²⁹ Cf. Numbers 25:1-3; Kings 11:1-3, 7 and 33.

³⁰ F.B. Nyamnjoh, "Racism, Ethnicity and the Media in Africa: Reflections Inspired by Studies of Xenophobia in Cameroon and South Africa," *Africa Spectrum*, 45(1), 2010.

origin? Whatever the answer, Ruth was determined to face it all in her quest for survival.

Xenophobia which sometimes Results in Violence against Migrants

In his research on Xenophobia in Cameroon and South Africa, Nyamnjoh discusses how Africans grapple with growing uncertainties and insecurities with regard to belonging.³¹ It goes without saying that xenophobia is on the rise in many countries in Southern Africa and others throughout the globe.³² In South Africa studies show that horrendous acts of xenophobia have taken place in the most recent years and women have not been excluded from such.³³

While the text of Ruth does not directly point to acts of xenophobia against Ruth, it does point to other attitudes that may be demeaning to her, as a woman and as a foreigner. For instance, Boaz inquires about the girl he sees gleaning in his field by asking the servant overseer ‘whose girl is that?’ (Ruth 2:5, NIV), so patriarchy obtrudes in Boaz’s question.³⁴ The question presumes that women are the property and responsibility of men.

In Southern Africa such patriarchal mores have led to increased risks for women migrants. We have already noted that in the case of Zimbabwean women who are forced by the prevailing political and economic crisis to move, have been exposed to all kinds of ills including being raped and

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ J. Sharp, "'Fortress S.A.': Xenophobic Violence in South Africa," *Anthropology Today*, 24(4), 2008.

³⁴ Katheryn P. Darr, *Far More Precious than Jewels: Perspectives on Biblical Women*, Louisville: Westminster Press, 1991, p. 73.

being called prostitutes and sex workers.³⁵ I recall a statement that I heard recently as I went to purchase some food for lunch outside the University of Botswana, along the road where some vendors, most of them women, carry out their informal catering businesses. When I asked one of the vendors where the owner of the stall from which I wanted to get some items was, as the stall was closed that day, I was shocked to hear the young lady saying that “*owai o robetse gompiano kana makwerekwere ba rekisa bosigo le motshegare*” (she must be sleeping because these foreigners sell day and night). When I probed further, I was told that at night they ‘sell their bodies’ and that during the day they do street vending. The lifestyle apparently is exhausting for the poor foreign girls most of whom are Zimbabweans. One is yet to find the truth behind such allegations and research is needed in that direction.

Poverty and Lack

Poverty characterizes the status of Ruth and Naomi as they migrate with nothing in their hands. We have observed that the situation of lack is what forces Ruth to take the risk of walking alone to seek somewhere where she could find something to gather and bring back home to her ageing mother-in-law Naomi (Ruth 2:2, 7).

It will not be an over-exaggeration to assert that many women in Southern African, find themselves in utter poverty together with their families and hence migrate in hope of improving their livelihoods. Ruth overcame the poverty through hard work and courage.

³⁵ Ezra Chitando, "'The Good Wife': A Phenomenological Re-Reading of Proverbs 31:10-31 in the Context of HIV/Aids in Zimbabwe," *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, 86, 2004.

Courage: An Essential Ingredient

The tale of Ruth really begins when she pledges never to leave her mother-in-law Naomi.

Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow after you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you sojourn I will sojourn; your people shall be my people and you God my God (Ruth 4:16, NIV)

The pledge represents the initial step of Ruth's courage to face life. While scholars debate the motif behind Ruth's courage to follow Naomi as her desire to secure her late husband's name,³⁶ it cannot diminish the idea that Ruth's fearless courage is remarkable. It "crosses ethnic and religious boundaries and flies in the face of social conventions."³⁷ Ruth embarks on an extraordinary act of courage to explore her possibilities of a better life in another country. I have argued elsewhere that by choosing to stick with Naomi, Ruth is acting out kindness under somewhat obligating circumstances.³⁸ Naomi is family to Ruth; she is elderly and grieving the loss of her husband and two sons and needs someone, especially one who is family like Ruth. Both women are vulnerable and perhaps Ruth understands that she is the only family that Naomi has left and hence she chooses radical solidarity with her.³⁹ Today, women find themselves in dire situations much like Ruth where they have to act to

³⁶ K.J.A. Larkin, *Ruth and Esther*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996; C.L. Meyers, "Returning Home: Ruth 1:8 and the Gendering of the Book of Ruth," in A. Brunner (ed), *A Feminist Companion to the Book of Ruth*, pp. 85-114, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.

³⁷ C. Pressler, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, Louisville: Westminster Press, 2002, p. 265.

³⁸ M.D. Kebaneilwe, *This Courageous Woman: A Socio-rhetorical Womanist Reading of Proverbs 31:10-31*, PhD, Murdoch University, 2012, p. 159.

³⁹ C. Pressler, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, Louisville: Westminster Press, 2002, p. 284. Athalya Brenner, "From Ruth to the Global Woman: Social and Legal Aspects," *Interpretation (Int)*, 64/2, 2010.

preserve not only their lives but even of those close to them. Much like Ruth, women in Southern Africa—and indeed across the globe—often find themselves having to make radical decisions to leave their homes, their people and their gods in search of better livelihoods. It suffices to say that like Ruth, women move across borders to fend for their loved ones. In Southern Africa, in particular, patriarchal cultures orientate women to be selfless in their endeavors and to put their families first, especially their husbands.⁴⁰ No wonder when life gets tough in their homes they are the first to make efforts to rescue the situation and this at times means having to leave their countries as migrants. For instance, Ezra Chitando asserts that the economic crisis in Zimbabwe has led Zimbabwean women into temporary economic exile, a thing which he maintains has seen an increase in their vulnerability.⁴¹ Nonetheless, the point I am trying to get home is that it takes courage to step out and face the uncertainties as a female migrant when need arises. Women should not be intimidated to take risks to migrate in search of greener pastures.

Ruth knew the dangers and risks involved in her moving to Israel with Naomi. For instance, she knew the culture well that without male associates in their lives, things could turn out really bad for them. Moabite women were hated and stereotyped by Israelites as harlots who whore away Israelite men from the worship of Yahweh. This should have

⁴⁰ Ezra Chitando, "'The Good Wife': a Phenomenological Re-Reading of Proverbs 31:10-31 in the Context of HIV/Aids in Zimbabwe," *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, 86, 2004; Madipoane Masenya (Ngwana'a Mphahlele), "Proverbs 31:10-31 in a South African Context: A Reading for the Liberation of African (Northern Sotho) Women," *Semeia* 78, 1997.

⁴¹ Ezra Chitando, "'The Good Wife': a Phenomenological Re-Reading of Proverbs 31:10-31 in the Context of HIV/Aids in Zimbabwe," *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, 86, 2004, p. 154.

deterred Ruth from migrating, but she had the courage and the zeal to search for a better life for her and her mother-in-law. As one scholar insists, Ruth knew she will be a foreigner with a possibility of many adversities ahead of her, but with her two eyes wide open to the consequences of her migration “she slams and bolts the door on her own future.”⁴²

Industriousness: A Trait that Women Migrants should Embrace

Ruth displayed an enviable work ethic when she got to the foreign land of Israel. Ruth takes the initiative and shows the zest to work with her hands in order to change the course of her life and that of her household.⁴³ The following statements reveals the presumed industry and zeal in Ruth

And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, “let me go, I pray you, to the field and gather among the ears of corn after him in whose eyes I may find kindness” (Ruth 2:2).

And she said, “let me glean, I pray” and she gathered among the sheaves after the reapers and she comes and remains from morning until now (Ruth 2:7).

Ruth 2:7 above indicates Ruth’s work ethic which impressed the servant overseer.⁴⁴ Ruth not only displayed remarkable industriousness and hard work, but that her initiative underscores the two widows’ poverty.⁴⁵

⁴² C.C. James, *The Gospel of Ruth: Loving God enough to Break the Rules*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2008.

⁴³ E.C. Stanton, “The Book of Ruth,” in Athalya Brenner (ed), *A Feminist Companion to the Book of Ruth*, Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p. 22.

⁴⁴ P. Tull, *Esther and Ruth*, Louisville: Westminster Press, 2003, p. 61. M.D. Kebaneilwe, *This Courageous Woman: A Socio-rhetorical Womanist Reading of Proverbs 31: 10-31*, PhD, Murdoch University, 2012, p. 161.

⁴⁵ C. Pressler, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, Louisville: Westminster Press, 2002.

Gleaning was the prerogative of the poor, so Ruth is within the bounds of culture.⁴⁶ Nonetheless it is inevitable to appreciate Ruth's initiative and determination to change her story. She shows acts of utter determination and enacts courage in the face of the harshness of her situation. We have already mentioned that the context of Ruth was such that, without a man in her life, she was vulnerable and could fall prey to unscrupulous men. But her quest for life overrides all fears as she strives to overcome her poverty and change not only her story but that of her family, Naomi. This is a lesson that women who migrate could take along for inspiration.

Conclusion

I have attempted to show that migration is a challenge throughout the world today. Both men and women find themselves caught up in the migration game contrary to the traditional belief that young and active men are the ones who migrate more than any other demographic group. Studies show that women are in fact more involved in migration than any other group. The case for Southern Africa has yielded similar sentiments with research showing an increase in female migration. Previous studies have also shown that the various reasons why people migrate include economic, social and political reasons. The brief discussion in this paper has revealed that women migrants like Ruth find themselves in dire situations faced with challenges that their male counterparts may not necessarily be exposed to. Such include being abused by unscrupulous men in host countries who may rape them, or being labeled harlots and so forth.

⁴⁶ Gail C. Streete, *The Strange Woman: Power and Sex in the Bible*, Louisville: Westminster Press, 1997.

The point is that Ruth persisted despite all the challenges and she ultimately conquered her predicaments and re-wrote her history to become part of the genealogy of David and ultimately of Jesus himself.

Chapter 7

African Migrant Women, Assets for Economic Development, in Need of Health Assets: A Feminist Theological Liberation Perspective

Lilian C. Siwila

Introduction

Migration and transnationalism have become one of the major world concerns seeking for both social-political and serious theological responses worldwide. Amidst all the mobility trends are people who belong to different churches, women and children who are the worst victims of migration and young girls who leave the comfort of their homes and family under vulnerable conditions to go and seek employment in order to better their lives and the lives of their families. From a theological perspective, the church in Africa is in a state of motion where it is constantly on the move. Many people are displaced by various factors from their comfort zones to places of refugee. In the South African context, the majority of the people that have been affected by migration have moved to other neighbouring countries either to seek employment in order to better their livelihood or as a result of political and civil unrest in their countries. Very few Africans in this region migrate for change of place of abode or for leisure purposes. Most of the young African women immigrants, especially those from within Africa, migrate to go and seek employment as house maids (domestic workers). These

young women are in many cases without proper documentation. Therefore, finding legal places where they can register for well-paying employment and better health care services becomes a challenge. This chapter presents the concept of migration and macro development from a feminist liberation theological perspective. The paper uses the story of Ruth (in Ruth 2 NIV) to show how young women migrants have used their skills in entrepreneurship as a form of survival.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework for the Study

In this chapter I use narrative as proposed by African women theologians as one of the core methodologies, and women's experience as the theoretical framework to analyze the role of women immigrants as economic assets in their host countries and their challenges in acquiring health assets. Kanyoro shows how liberation theologies have demystified the study of theology by using storytelling as a method of bringing to the center of theological debate the perspective of the disadvantaged communities.¹ Hence the stories of these immigrant women that were highlighted in the Contextual Bible Study that I will relate to later are stories of disadvantaged women whom the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (the Circle) stands for in their call for the liberation of women from all forms of oppression. Isabel Phiri et al argue that it is only when women's experiences are respected and their stories are heard and shared, that there will be a gradual shift in the way they are valued and treated.² Therefore, the experiences of these women immigrants that are presented in this paper become the starting point for theological analysis. Kanyoro then argues that doing theology in this manner does not

¹ R.M. Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Perspective*, Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2002, p. 23.

² Isabel Phiri et al, "Introduction," in Phiri et al (eds), *Her-Stories: Hidden Stories of Women of Faith in Africa*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 2002, p. 2.

only simply contribute to the current streams of theological thinking, but contributes to the theology of challenging and renaming some of the experiences of women such as migrant women.³ Economic struggles, political unrest and other factors that lead to migration of people from their homelands all affect women's lives differently. Therefore, when using this theory, African women theologians are also conscious of the fact that women's experiences are diverse. Therefore, while this study aims at highlighting the economic contributions made by migrant women as part of the experiences of these women, there is also need to take into consideration the challenges and sufferings that these women go through in the hope for survival in a foreign land. For some of these women the church is the only place of hope, the safe haven for their souls, while for others even the church does not provide any safety for. Like the Psalmist they would ask "*how can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land*"⁴ while seeking for the church they had embraced in their host countries.

Migration as a Challenge to African Hospitality

Among the African concepts that have been discussed by African Women Theologians is the theology of hospitality and its effect to women. In this chapter I wish to highlight the relationship between hospitality and migration as it relates to African women. Despite being economic assets, African migrant women also suffer the challenge of being rejected and seen as strangers in the host nations. Discussing the issue of migration as it relates to hospitality Mercy Amba Oduyoye observes that, "in the turmoil of Africa, refugees are received in the 'modern' camps for the masses, but the small groups that arrive meld

³ Ibid, p. 23.

⁴ Psalms 137:4.

into the local population, especially if they have the same language."⁵ In the current situation, especially in Southern Africa, this group that melds into the local communities is even larger than those who arrive as documented refugees. It is within this group that the women under this study fall. Although they may speak the local language as Oduyoye alludes, they still find themselves on the margins of society, without much welcome from the locals as they are still treated as strangers. When defining hospitality, Oduyoye lists four concepts that make up the meaning of hospitality: "(1) Welcoming/receiving, reception; (2) Charity/almsgiving; (3) Boarding and lodging/hotel, hospital; and (4) Protecting/sanctuary and integration.' She further states, 'Receptions, hospices, hospital and even integration, as in acquiring citizenship, have monetary price-tags in our contemporary experience.'"⁶ In agreement with Oduyoye, Byrne sees hospitality as "conjuring up the context of guests, visitors, putting on meals for them, providing shelter for them."⁷ Unlike the call from Oduyoye, the current global context has challenged the concept of hosting a stranger and replaced it with fear of the stranger. Therefore, apart from receiving resentment from the locals as a result of their being strangers, foreigners are sometimes also seen as a threat to the safety of society. Hence challenging the African concept of hospitality that calls for welcoming strangers.

⁵ Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology: Introductions in Feminist Theology*, Sheffield Academic Press 2001, p. 92.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 93.

⁷ B. Byrne, *The Hospitality of God: A Reading of Luke's Gospel*, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000.

African Women Migrants as Assets for Economic Development

Migration is part of today's global problems, the mobility of humanity within and outside the African continent for example, has become increasingly more pronounced now than before in world history. People have moved within and outside their countries for various reasons. The current scenario of political and economic unrest worldwide has greatly contributed to human mobility in search of better life and living conditions. Therefore, we can assuredly argue that migration is increasingly becoming a necessary constituent of economic and social development. Amidst all these movements are issues of gender dynamics, health, poverty, economic development and business entrepreneurship. In the past the kind of migration that took place across Africa concerned only men who went to work in industries and mines, even though literature also records incidents where women began to migrate to cities seeking a better life.⁸ The current scenario is changing in that we are seeing more and more women migrating to seek employment across African countries and abroad. Therefore, gender, migration and economic development cannot be separated. This is because as women settle in their new environment, they begin to contribute economically through various ways, such as selling on the streets or providing domestic services to people of host nations. Although these services are in many ways taken for granted, suffice it to say that many working-class families have benefited from the domestic services provided by these domestic worker migrants and eventually helping them to be effective in their work place. This chain

⁸ The migration of women into the Copperbelt province of Zambia is a good example of women participating in the project of migration in search of employment. However, women who left the villages to go to the Copperbelt, experienced abuse at the hands of the colonial masters and the village headmen who saw them as prostitutes seeking to go and exchange their sexual favours for money.

reaction, which in most cases is not well recorded scholarly and coordinated in our discussions of development in that they leave out a significant group of people who contribute to what happens at macro level in terms of development, needs to be revisited by African Women Theologians in their search for justice for women and the girl child.

In most African countries when we talk about women and development, the focus is on how women are involved as objects of development and those in need of help from the western imperialistic economic powers. Instead of being seen as agents of development, women in most cases are seen as objects of development. Therefore, some of the jobs that women do to develop themselves and the society at large such as domestic work, selling of basic foods such as vegetables in the streets, are not viewed as points of development. Throughout this discussion I argue that through these so-called ordinary jobs such as domestic work and small business entrepreneurship, migrant women have contributed to development in the host countries. For example, migrant women as domestic workers suffer various types of abuse at the hands of their employers despite their great input in the success of their employers at their respective work places.⁹ The voices of these domestic workers clearly indicate a clear sign of challenges faced by many other women immigrants. In order to locate the study in the religious paradigms I use the response of one of the participants in the Contextual Bible Study which I conducted on the story of Ruth with a group of local South African men and women from a township called France in Pietermaritzburg. The aim of the Bible study was to show how the story of Ruth can be used as a way of promoting women's economic empowerment. The Contextual Bible Study generated a number of themes to show the need for women to be enterprising

⁹ Leomile Mangoedi and Moraka H. Mogashoa, "Mission from the Margins: A Reflection on Faith by Women Displaced or Trafficked into Forced Labour in the City of Tshwane," 2014, <http://missionalia.journals.ac.za> <http://dx.doi.org/10.7832/42-1-2-53Missionfromthemargins>.

in order to provide sufficient resources for their families.¹⁰ Among the themes that emerged was the one addressed in this study. The groups also reflected on how women immigrants use their business skills as a form of survival. One woman from the group stated:

We see them in the streets with their children at their backs selling sweets and chips. Sacrificing their time and energy. They look positive and hopeful about their businesses; they plait other women's hairs in the streets. And they still go to work as maids during the week. To me these are the real Ruths of our time. Gleaning even where there seems to be no corn.

As I reflect on the ways in which young women migrants have contributed to economic growth through their involvement in entrepreneurship, I also wish to highlight the lack of recognition of the contribution made by these young women to economic growth.

Gleaning where there seems to be no Corn

One of the key themes that has been lifted by African women theologians in their search for women empowerment is the idea of women as economic providers in their homes. This is clearly outlined in the works of the founder of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, Mercy Amba Oduyoye in her book *Introducing African Women Theology*. In this chapter her work, together with my MA thesis,¹¹ have been

¹⁰ France Township is one of the densely populated areas in Pietermaritzburg, most of the people living in this township are unemployed or hold very low paying job such as domestic workers and shop attendants. Therefore, the data collected from this research was used to focus on the theme of women and economic empowerment. However, like in any other CBS, other themes emerged such as the role of domestic workers to economic empowerment which I am now focusing on.

¹¹ Lilian Siwila, *African Women, Hospitality and HIV/AIDS: The Case of the Mothers' Union of St Margaret United Church of Zambia*, MA, University of KwaZulu Natal, 2005.

used as the key conversing partners with other circle work.¹² *Gleaning where there seems to be no corn* is an illustration that I have borrowed from one respondent in the Contextual Bible to discuss how Ruth's story as a foreign woman who received hospitality from the host nation to work and provide for her household can be used to illustrate the initiatives used by African migrant women to gain economic resources to help sustain their households in a seemingly hostile environment. From the story shared above, it can be argued that in most African societies, women are the most economically productive. Like Ruth of the Bible, they glean not only for their own benefits but for the benefit of their families. In the case of migrant women, some of these women are young girls who have left their homes to seek employment in other countries in order to provide for the larger family left behind. They have an obligation to send money home and ensure that the siblings continue with their education. Hence the need to glean even where there seems to be no grain in order to source for the larger family waiting for income from them. Rahila sees income generating activities as being the only way in which women raise enough resources to help them continue in their practice of hospitality. In this way, she states, "women will be able to support their families and also have enough resources to use in taking care of the poor and orphans."¹³

Julius Nyerere linked hospitality with work and economic productivity when he said, quoting a Swahili proverb: "treat your guests as guests for two days and on the third day, give them hoes."¹⁴ Mercy Oduyoye further comments on the effects of globalization on African hospitality saying,

¹² For more information see Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology*, Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.

¹³ Rahila (1997) p. 123 cited in Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology*, 2001.

¹⁴ Quoted in Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology*, Sheffield Academic Press, 2001, p. 95.

“Globalization knows nothing of hospitality.”¹⁵ She goes on to show that the oppressive economic relations between Africa and the West are not just an academic discussion but also a serious spiritual deficiency. Mercy Oduyoye is of the view that “hospitality should be seen as part of the economic development, and poverty as a major obstacle to development and hospitality.”¹⁶ This study agrees with these scholars in that unless hospitality is viewed in the manner suggested by the scholars, the practice will continue to be a threat to women.

Oduyoye quotes Murigande, who raises a crucial question saying, “What is hospitality in the midst of no housing, slums, neglect of hygiene, criminality, malnutrition, unemployment, delinquency, prostitution and so on?”¹⁷ Oduyoye alludes all these as challenges to the host nation being hospitable to the stranger (own words). She, however does not condemn hospitality but questions the way it is being practiced, especially when it does not benefit the lives of women. Byrene on the other hands talks about hospitality as board and lodging, making the stranger feel ‘at home’ in our home—enlarging our home to make that wider ‘at home-ness’ possible.¹⁸ Although the welcome of these refugees has had an impact on a host country’s economy, it is the African heart of hospitality that should influence the host community to accept these refugees as fellow Africans and enlarge their homes for the strangers to feel at ‘home’ in a foreign land. In relation to the idea of caring for refugees, even in the earliest time of the tradition, care for the strangers went

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 97.

¹⁶ Rahila (1997) p. 119, cited by Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women’s Theology*, 2001.

¹⁷ Murigande cited in Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women’s Theology*, Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.

¹⁸ Byrene cited in Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women’s Theology*, Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.

beyond the household. It involved community responsibility providing and depending on legislation as well as generous individual responses. There was never an assumption that individual response alone could care for large numbers of needy strangers and the strangers were often encountered in a more public place,¹⁹ but the current economic situation in most African countries has turned the tide upside down when it comes to caring for strangers. This is reflected in the way in which African women immigrants are received by some of the host countries. Since most of these women do not have legal documents, their status increases their vulnerability, hence making it difficult for the host countries to provide them with the much-needed form of hospitality.

African women who see hospitality as part of their everyday obligation have not been able to fulfil the economic demands of their nations, leading to their questioning of the meaning of hospitality in relation to the present-day economic hardships. As African women look at all these issues that have affected Africa in recent years, they see hospitality also getting phased out due to factors such as migration, globalization and other social ills. The communal life of having '*everything in common*' that was once enjoyed in our African continent is now challenged by individualistic life and fear of the stranger. People no longer live a life of sharing their resources without asking for a payback. And the former idea of a stranger being welcomed is slowly fading away since, the stranger has become the enemy who may attack the host at any time.

Factors Influencing Stranger and Outsider Attitude to the Insider

Poverty in Africa is one of the aspects that have affected African women's hospitality. Women, who are ranked among the poorest on the

¹⁹ D.C. Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999, p. 41.

continent, have struggled to access enough resources that would enable them to continue their practice of hospitality. In the case of immigrant women, the change of direction in the African way of practicing hospitality where people are no longer concerned with the outsider, has also been influenced by the economic hardships faced by many, especially in situations where these women immigrants have ended up doing some of the dehumanizing jobs in order to earn income for survival. The experience of poverty in Africa has not only affected the welcoming of strangers but it has also made people lose their self-worth. "Poverty means more than lack of economic resources, it also means a loss of human dignity."²⁰ When these African migrant women go out to look for food for their families, some of them end up in different vulnerable situations such as selling their bodies for money as sex workers or even being raped and abused by their employers. This kind of life style has greatly affected the living conditions of many of these women. Njiri, commenting on women's involvement in the community in trying to provide for their families, argues that "The activities in the home are almost exclusively the responsibility of a woman. She is responsible for survival tasks which are essential for daily life."²¹ Throughout their works African Women Theologians have stood for the promotion of humanity, especially the dignity of women. African women theologians agree with Rosemary Radford-Ruether who argues that whatever dehumanizes women should not be considered as redemptive.²² African Women Theologians have rejected the Christian metaphor that locates women in the second order of creation. In their volume *Her Stories* Phiri et al

²⁰ E.N. Njiri, "Women's Hospitality and Economic Development," (Approach: From Women's Experience of Contemporary Africa) in Oduyoye (ed), *Transforming Power: Women in the Household of God*, Accra: Sam-Woode, 1997.

²¹ Ibid, p. 132.

²² Rosemary Radford-Ruether, *Sexism and God Talk*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1988.

demonstrate how African women's theologies are concerned about nurturing justice and human dignity.²³ Oduyoye further states that human dignity cannot be achieved as long as women remain oppressed.²⁴ Human dignity requires that we begin to see women through the image of God. "Not until we say that what hurts women also hurts the entire body of Christ, we will in truth be able to speak of one body."²⁵

Human Dignity as a Health Asset

From a Christian perspective, most of the African churches have recognized the value of the intersection between gender, religion and health. This is done mainly through the church's involvement in hospices and healthcare centres. As for the Circle, the theme of health is among the main themes where a lot of literature has been produced and a number of debates raised. For many years, women's and children's health emerged as the core value of research for Circle women. This is besides HIV research where the Circle emerged as the key research team in HIV and Theology in Africa. Scholars such as Musa Dube have used the Bible to seek ways of engaging with HIV and AIDS while Phiri, Nadar, Hinga, Siwila, Moyo, Njoroge, Haddad, Ackerman and others focused on African culture and the church in addressing HIV as a health issue affecting both men and women. Thus, in relation to the need for human dignity of these migrant women we cannot talk about their human dignity without looking at the issue of health. An Akan proverb from Ghana states that

²³ Isabel Phiri et al, "Introduction," in Phiri et al (eds), *Her-Stories: Hidden Stories of Women of Faith in Africa*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 2002.

²⁴ Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology: Introductions in Feminist Theology*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 192.

“If you have health, you have wealth”²⁶ Akoto argues that women’s health is multifaceted including all aspects of life from physical, psychological to economic.²⁷ Therefore for migrant women health should be viewed through the eyes of Akoto who reveals all the fragility of human life that is associated with health. The call for the healing of these women should be holistic. Brigid Sackey gives us the definition of healing saying:

The term healing is a blanket label that refers to amelioration or relief of problems in all aspects of everyday life as well as great afflictions. This refers to a cure from a toothache, stomach pain, mental illness, or infertility signifies healing, do making profits in commercial activities, defeating an opponent in any event such as litigation, repossession of a fortune or a job, passing an examination or an interview for a job, obtaining a visa to travel, winning political elections, or improving human relationships. Healing can also be regarded as a conquest, victory over evil spirit or witches that are believed to obstruct people’s progress.”²⁸

Besides being productive assets for economic growth, African women migrant domestic workers also encounter health challenges. Most of them lack the required health assets due to their immigration status. This study argues that since migration is also a social determinant of women’s reproductive health and a strong component of economic and social development, the study is not complete without addressing the need for these women immigrants’ need to acquire health assets that will make

²⁶ A proverb that is always stated by a Ghanaian friend and has developed a meaning for me to use in this paper.

²⁷ D. Akoto, “Women and Health in Ghana and the Trokosi Practice,” in I.A. Phiri and S. Nadar (eds), *African Women Religion and Health: Essays in Honour of Mercy Amba Oduyoye*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 2006, p. 98.

²⁸ Brigid M. Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion. The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006, p. 111.

them live effective lives in the foreign land. The lives of these women who have sacrificed their lives to save the lives of others is more at risk than the lives of the people they are trying to save in their host countries. One critical health risk they face has to do with their reproductive health rights. Silence around this issue means that both the church and society fail to recognize the need to respond to women's biological needs. Just like with any other human being, migrant women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights need to be addressed as a health aspect. Reproductive health in the context of migration continues to be a serious and persisting problem which requires the attention of all stakeholders. Besides being a gender issue, we can argue that reproductive health for these women embraces the whole aspect of human life, that is, culture, religion, health, legal, social and economic aspects. One aspect of these migrant domestic workers' reproductive health that needs to be addressed is the issue of child bearing. From a health perspective, this study argues that when women migrate, they also move with their wombs, therefore, their sexuality and reproductive health rights are embedded in their identity as women. And yet in most cases migrant women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights are under surveillance and subjected to regulations of the host countries through their health care policies. In some countries they are restricted from having children, while in others they find restrictions to access family planning health assets. Therefore, this study challenges the church to work with other bodies to consider the plight of migrant women's reproductive health rights. While the host country's health policies may be hostile to these migrant women, the church can come in to provide basic health assets such as shelter, water, food and, where necessary, basic family planning lessons and other resources that would help to ensure that these women live lives worthy of human beings. As such the need for advocacy on behalf of vulnerable women as proposed by the Circle becomes inevitable for the church to embrace. The ecumenical call for the church is to move together towards life. Just like the way in which Ruth found

support and comfort among the local people as a Moabite woman, migrant women also need that kind of welcome which will allow them to glean and be provided with required health assets to better their livelihoods.

Since Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights is a key domain in discussing gender and migration, proponents of development and population control through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) have in many ways attempted to control the Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of immigrant women. This surveillance and control of women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights carries along legal, socio-economic, religious and cultural regulations that are a threat to women's wellbeing. Second, migrant women with less education tend to fall into the cracks of the health services. Hence, we see these women struggling to access health services as required due to many factors such as language, which is also a serious barrier to health services, lack of education, or lack of legal documents. Finally, it is also important to state that in most countries, migrants' health is determined by the host country's health care systems which in most cases the migrants have no control over or even access to.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the experiences of migrant women in the host countries. The aim of the chapter was to show that although much of the literature on the experiences of African migrant women tends to focus on their vulnerability as illegal immigrants and the need for them to be either embraced as refugees or repatriated back to their countries of origin, this chapter has argued that migrant women in most African countries can also be seen as assets for economic growth. This is through their provision of services such as domestic workers to many working-class families that cannot afford the local services. The study approached this debate using the framework of African women theologies, especially the

work of Oduyoye, where she uses hospitality to show how African women have been abused in their effort to provide services for the rest of the community. The chapter concludes that although these migrant women can be seen as service providers, their health is sometimes compromised through the conditions they find themselves in. The study then calls for the need for human dignity as a way of responding to feminist redemption of migrant women.

Chapter 8

Church, Disability, and Development: The Case of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board

Elias Kifon Bongmba

Introduction¹

In this chapter, I argue that addressing the problem of disability in African societies calls for the integration of disability in the development mission of the state and the church. I begin the chapter with a brief description of the state of disability work, especially among scholars, of religion and theology. I next argue that certain conditions are necessary for African states to mount an inclusive development agenda. Following this, I discuss the compelling reasons why scholars of religion and theologians must appeal to the state and all parties working with people with disabilities (PWD) to make disability a major development issue. I later argue that religious communities have a stake in disability and development and should contribute to that discussion based on the work they already do with disability. I do this by illustrating how a development

¹ I thank Dean Nicholas Schumway of the School of Humanities at Rice University for providing research support for me to travel to Cameroon and to travel to the 2017 ATISCA Conference held at the University of Zimbabwe. In addition to materials gathered on two research trips to Cameroon, this chapter is written in a dialogical manner in conversation with several perspectives from different disciplines. Therefore, I have used many on-line resources and published papers, duly cited. Any idea that is not attributed is my own error.

model was implicit in the CBCHS in its leprosy treatment and rehabilitation programme at Mbingo Hospital. This study is based on two preliminary researches in Cameroon that have focused mostly on the exploration of the work of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services (CBCHS) on disability to understand the broad, comprehensive approach to disability. Discussions, in this aspect of the services of the CBCHS, were held at Bamenda in June 2016 when I talked to the Director of the Health Services and Senior members of staff charged with coordinating the Disability Services. Follow-up interview and discussions were held at Bamenda in June 2017. The data from these interviews is being evaluated, and for that reason, this chapter has a narrow focus on the historical dimension of the treatment of people with leprosy and a theo-ethical analysis of the imperative of an integrated approach to disability.

Disability Studies in Africa

Scholars and interest groups have engaged in disability studies in Africa for more than three decades, and these studies continue as it has become clear that disability affects all facets of life including the economic development that continues to elude many African countries. The Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) organized two conferences out of which two volumes were published. The Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE), EDAN and the Association of Theological Institutions in South East Asia (ATESEA) volume was titled *Disabled God amidst Broken People*.² The second that came out of a conference organized in Kenya was titled *Disability, Society, and Theology*:

² Wati Longchar and Gordon Cowans, *Disabled God amidst Broken People. Doing Theology from a Disability Perspective*, Manila: Association for Theological Education in South East Asia, 2011.

Voices from Africa.³ In 2016 EDAN published *Disability in Africa: Resource Book for Theology and Religious Studies*.⁴ This significant work which came out of the collaboration of EDAN, the Association of Theological Institutions in Southern and Central Africa (ATISCA), and conferences at Justo Mwale University and the University of Malawi provides a roadmap for understanding disability from our discipline - religion, theology, and philosophy. The contributors offer a critical analysis of cultural beliefs in specific African communities, pointing out that discrimination and stigmatization remained in many places even when governments in Botswana and other African countries were studying and issuing regulations on PWD.⁵ The forthcoming *Routledge Handbook of Disability in Southern Africa* will provide new research on the subject in the region.⁶

The plight of the people and the challenges they face calls for critical reflection on development because it is a project that cannot be delayed. Development needs to focus on ways of enabling the poor and those who live on the margins of the economy.⁷ Development will take place if we

³ Samuel Kabue, Esther Mombo, Joseph Galgalo, C.B. Peter, *Disability, Society and Theology: Voices from Africa*, Limuru: Zapf Chancery, 2011.

⁴ Samuel Kabue, James Amanze, Christina Landman (eds), *Disability in Africa: Resource Book for Theology and Religious Studies*, Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2016.

⁵ Obed N. Kealotswe, "Attitudes Towards Disability in Botswana," in Samuel Kabue, James Amanze, Christina Landman, (eds) *Disability in Africa: Resource Book for Theology and Religious Studies*, Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2016, pp. 42-55 [48-49].

⁶ Tsitsi Chataika (ed), *The Routledge Handbook of Disability in Southern Africa*, New York: Routledge, 2018.

⁷ See Steve de Gruchy, "Of Agency, Assets and Appreciation: Seeking some Commonalities between Theology and Development," in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 117, 2003, pp. 20-39.

establish a conducive climate. The climate of development involves many factors that are already part of the infrastructure of most countries; a constitutional form of government that is dedicated to protecting the interests of all members of the political community, especially its most vulnerable members. Required are enforceable laws and regulations, and a progressive and fair tax system which will encourage trade with other nations. It is also important that states support a financial system that is strong and stable to support the local economy in a global context. A system of contract that would eliminate corruption, but make sure that projects are executed correctly and on schedule. A lean government bureaucracy which will prioritize the business of the people. These ideas call for a system of governance that has checks and balances at all levels of government. Finally, a government that will place the interests, the wellbeing, and prosperity of its citizens at the top of its agenda.

Disability and Development

The work which African religious communities and African governments do on disability cannot be done in isolation but should be part of a broad development agenda for African countries. A new strategic thinking is necessary for states and communities to meet the needs of PWDs and this calls for an integrated approach to development. By development here I refer to changes and projects which are undertaken (mainly by states and high impact economic actors) to improve and transform the socio-economic realities of a political community. Development is a complex notion because it involves competing ideas, priorities, practices, and processes which are political but also reflect other areas of human existence such as culture and spirituality. At the heart of every development initiative, are economic resources and the management of those resources which can be enhanced or constrained by political practice. However, if one thing is clear, it is the fact that the idea of development is shared across a variety of discursive terrain that it is no longer a matter

of the political economy, although there is no doubt that for many African countries, the political economy remains an important determinant of development, which is increasingly recognized as human development.⁸ Development approaches championed mainly through liberal economic policies which privileged capital, wealth, market growth as well as the transfer of technology, even if backed by both micro and macroeconomic policies did not always work, even though they remain significant in economic development.

Development is essential and Africa is a resource-rich region, which, after the long economic crisis that began in the 1980s has registered positive numbers in growth. In its 2014 development report for Africa, The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reported that the annual averaged growth rate increased from 1.8 percent between 1980-1989 to 2.6 percent in 1990-2000 and rose up to 5.3 during the period 2000-2010 with Angola and Equatorial Guinea registering double-digit growth.⁹ Although the continent experienced a slow down during the financial crisis of 2008-2012, after the crisis, it still registered a growth rate that was 2 percent above the global average. The executive summary of the report suggests that “Better macroeconomic management, high domestic demand, and a relatively more stable political environment are some of the internal factors that supported growth on the

⁸ See for example Mahbub ul Haq, *Reflections on Human Development*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995; Selim Jahan, *Handbook on Human Development*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002; Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999; France Stewart, “Capabilities and Human Development: Beyond the Individual - the Critical Role of Social Institutions and Social Competencies,” in *Human Development Report Office Occasional Paper*, 2012/03.

⁹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Economic Development in Africa, Report 2014: Catalysing Investment for Transformative Growth in Africa*, New York, 2014, p. 2.

continent.” Outside the continent, lower commodity prices, better connection with emerging economies, higher development assistance and an increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) helped.¹⁰

The report notes that these strong numbers do not erase the many challenges Africa faces in development. These include: “food insecurity, high unemployment, poverty, and inequality, to commodity dependence, lack of economic transformation, environmental degradation, and low integration of the continent in the global economy.”¹¹ The report notes that African Heads of Governments and the New African Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) who advocate that Africa should own the process and the outcome of its development have also called for interventions in agriculture and food production to enhance food security. State actors should promote regional economic integration and collaborate on infrastructure building, and come up with multi-state ideas on how to tackle climate change, environmental degradation, to promote human and social development. These priorities call for action that goes beyond conference resolutions. They require sound economic management, a capacity development that empowers all members of the political community, especially women and people living with disabilities. Disability should receive priority because it is a significant contributor to poverty, inequality, and injustice. It is for this reason that our thinking about disability should include research on a broad range of issues around development on the African continent.

However, during the last three decades, it has become increasingly clear to national governments and international stakeholders in development that much of the effort put into development is not succeeding as many stakeholders expected. It was not merely that the global population had expanded, but the realization that there is more to development than the

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

bare statistical economic outcomes. Development experts have argued that it is not only the idea of development; but human development that was at stake. In a succinct statement on human development in 2009, the UNDP argued that human development understood in its most basic form was promoting human well-being.¹² UNDP has over the years demonstrated that key indicators of the Human Development Index included knowledge, a decent standard of living and long and healthy life.¹³ A people-centered development would create opportunities and strengthen people to make critical choices for their lives. Such an approach to development has the potential to promote well-being. Human development implies negotiable choices that change regularly, and for that reason, the political process cannot hold development hostage to a list of priorities determined exclusively by the political élites. The members of a political community as persons, constitute the wealth of nations. Development then should expand the choices people have to lead lives that they value.

One of the leading theorists of development today who speaks to what I consider relevant to the question of disability is Amartya Sen who has articulated the human capabilities approach development. Sen has also appropriately described development as freedom arguing that the idea of freedom should be the aim, means, and hence “the process of human freedoms.”¹⁴ A free society is a necessary condition for the cultivation of human capabilities, which could enable people to overcome dependence, “deprivations as starvation, undernourishment, escapable morbidity and

¹² United Nations Development Programme, “Human Development Reports” <http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev> [3.8.2017].

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, New York: Random House, 1999, p. 36; See also, <https://dpp2014.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/developmentasfreedomintronch1new-c-2.pdf> [9.5.2018].

premature mortality as well as the freedoms that are associated with being literate and numerate, enjoying political participation and uncensored speech and so on."¹⁵ Therefore, development strategies should prioritize political freedoms because people who are free will think creatively about different ways of addressing and meeting their own needs.¹⁶ Sen's approach is appealing for several reasons. First, it avoids the pitfalls of grounding development on need and dependency. Several years ago, Steve de Gruchy argued that those concerned with development should rethink the needs-based development model because it creates dependency and complacency.¹⁷ I agree that development projects inspired by need and images of desperation tend to promote complacency not only among recipients of charity but among some African states where the political leaders are happy to allow such development programmes to continue. De Gruchy argues that development aid works best when the assistance that is given develops assets that empower the community and move them away from the situation of dependency. The assets needed include human resources - the people themselves and all they bring to the development process, groups that participate in development such as religious communities, state institutions, and local self-help groups. Development workers can work

¹⁵ Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 36.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 153.

¹⁷ See Steve de Gruchy, "Of Agency, Assets and Appreciation: Seeking some Commonalities between Theology and Development," in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 117, 2003, pp. 20-39. See John Kretzmann and John McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*, Chicago: ACTA Publications, 1993.

together with these resources to strengthen members of the community to develop their capacities and move away from dependency.¹⁸

The question of development in Africa has long been contentious and ranges between “the pessimism of diagnosis and the optimism of prescription.”¹⁹ He argued that the negative perspective on the prospects for development in Africa lies in the fact that people have compared African states facing a crisis with idealized states and thus given rise to what critics think Africa should be. Thandika Mkandawire argued that

¹⁸ Steve de Gruchy, “Of Agency, Assets and Appreciation: Seeking Some Commonalities Between theology and Development,” in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 117, 2003, p. 32. De Gruchy also argues that, for Sustainable Life Framework to work, one needs to take into consideration five important livelihood assets which people have: human capital, social capital, natural capital, physical capital, and financial capital. I am indebted to de Gruchy for the literature on Sustainable Life Framework see: United Nations Development Programme, Sustainable Livelihoods Unit Home Page, www.undp.org/sl/Overview/an_overview.htm; Rob Fincham et al (eds), *Beyond the Summit*, University of Cape Town Press, 2003; Mark Butler and Ran Greenstein, *Sustainable Livelihoods: Towards a Research Agenda for the Church Land Programme*, Johannesburg: Community Agency for Social Enquiry, 1999, p. 46; Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway, “Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century,” *Institute of Development Studies Discussion Paper*, 296, University of Sussex, Brighton: IDS Publications, 1992; Czech Conroy, “Preface,” and “Introduction,” in C. Conroy and M. Litvinoff, *The Greening of Aid: Sustainable Livelihoods in Practice*, London: Earthscan Publications, 1988; Robert Chambers, “Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Key Strategy for People, Environment and Development,” in C. Conroy and M. Litvinoff, *The Greening of Aid: Sustainable Livelihoods in Practice*, London: Earthscan Publications, 1988; Koos Neeffes, *Environments and Livelihoods: Strategies for Sustainability*, Oxford: Oxfam, 2000, pp. 58-112; People-Centered Development Forum, “Principles of Sustainable Livelihoods,” <http://iisd.ca/pcdf/1995/princsl.htm>.

¹⁹ Thandika Mkandawire, “Thinking about Developmental State in Africa,” http://archive.unu.edu/hq/academic/Pg_area4/Mkandawire.html [17.7.2017].

this was not a helpful approach although he agreed that the state which played a key role in development has not taken on other roles which are inimical to development and critics argued that the African state has ceded its role in development to non-governmental and faith-based organizations. He pointed out that the idealist side of the debate conceived of the mission of the state to be a development which meant gathering resources and promoting industrialization, while the structural perspective stressed the capacity of the state to pursue and implement policies wisely and effectively in collaboration with “institutional, technical, administrative and political” operatives.

I find it instructive that to move forward, African states need to balance ideals and policies to claim ownership of their development programmes. I emphasize policy not because I consider it the magic bullet, but because policies are driven by ideologies, visions, and priorities which are brought together to guide the state to map out its development priorities. Policies articulate the vision, priorities, and principles that will govern the implementation of the plans that have been determined to be in the interest of the state. Recently several economists issued a statement which they claim is a consensus on policymaking.²⁰ Like many position papers, it may have its own biases, but I find it instructive. They begin with the premise that creative policy thinking is necessary because we are experiencing unprecedented technical progress that holds both promise and peril. It promises rising standards of living, yet the peril lies in the fact that it has resulted in the displacement of labour and created unemployment among the youths. Although economic expansion has moved some low-income countries into the middle-income countries group, many groups in these countries have not benefitted from this shift

²⁰ "Stockholm Statement towards a Consensus on the Principles of Policy-making for the Contemporary World," www.wider.unu.edu/sites/default/files/News/Documents/Stockholm%20Statement.pdf [17.7.2017].

and, in their words, “have been left behind.” For example, wherever you go in Cameroon, there is a general feeling that at a time when the resources of the country have expanded, there is very little for the ordinary person. People believe that government ministers and heads of departments run the country as if it were their private estate. Even citizens of advanced economies complain that they have been swept away from economic security by the tide of globalization, a situation which has led to the election of President Donald Trump, Macron, and Brexit.

The experts point out that the economic conditions that have led to growing inequality around the world today threaten social cohesion and have created a crisis, in some cases leading to direct conflict and war. The environmental crisis is real. Growing urbanization might seem like it will improve productivity, but it also contributes to greater challenges associated with urban sprawl and slums, poverty, and conflicts. These things are taking place at a time of unprecedented changes that have changed the global community in significant ways, but they also offer important challenges.

A successful response to these challenges lies in designing policies to harness global forces for development and steering a course towards the promise, rather than the peril. The design of such policies requires a clear vision of the goals of development policy and learning from the successes and mistakes of the past and from the body of economic theory and statistical analysis accumulated over a long period. It is now evident that some of the recommendations of more traditional economics were not valid. Policy makers cannot rely on simple policy guides such as holding the fiscal balance in check, using monetary policy to control inflation, providing macroeconomic stability, and then leaving it to the market to do the rest. Assuming that such an approach will promote growth that trickles down to the poor is not a tenable premise.

Indeed, we owe some of our current predicament to too close an adherence to that dated advice.²¹

Based on this, the experts suggest that policymakers reconsider certain ideas and priorities. First, the GDP should not be treated as an end in itself, but should be seen as a tool to strive for the improvement of social life in areas that include “health, education, employment, security, as well as consumption.” They stress that wellbeing is multidimensional and policymakers should not focus only on income. They suggest, for instance, that policymakers consider pre-school nutrition and basic health care for all, because GDP growth will not serve as a magic bullet and may come “at the expense of these dimensions of wellbeing, including those related to local environmental and global climate degradation.”²² Furthermore, it may not lead to:

The eradication of oppressive norms and discriminatory practices against vulnerable groups. These usually require deliberate interventions ... Cultural and social contexts differ, as do histories ... In the past, there was a propensity to prescribe a uniform policy code (developed in some rich country) for all nations. While there are broad policy principles, we all need to pay heed to, there has to be space for diversity and context-specificity of policy.²³

Second, they call for inclusive development, and this implies that development should be “socially and economically inclusive, and does not leave behind groups of the population—whether identified by gender, ethnicity, or other social indicators.”²⁴ This should include for our purposes people with disability, who are generally seen as targets of sparing charity. States can no longer continue to place them on the fringes of

²¹ Ibid, p. 3.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

development policy and treat them as helpless beings who deserve charity. Therefore, policymakers should plan development with the most vulnerable in mind, and they should make a concerted effort to narrow the gap between those who have and the have-nots.

Third, they emphasize that sustaining the environment is a requirement and not an option, especially in countries that have experienced degradation, even if those places have experienced a rise in income. The competition for resources that could rise from the challenges we face with the environment could create a climate of conflict and insecurity. We are seeing that in many rural areas in Africa, where the struggle for land is leading to deadly conflicts and severely strained relationships between neighbouring villages because livelihood and prospects for agricultural production are threatened. The experts warn that these tensions cannot be left to the free market forces. Fourth, the experts argue that the market needs to be balanced with ideals of the state and the community because markets are not neutral forces but social institutions, which should be regulated because they do not have a natural tendency to deliver inclusiveness and equality.

Fifth, policymakers should work to provide macroeconomic stability by ensuring that the economy is managed to ensure balance with long-term planning that will lead to a sustainable financial system. In doing this, states should work to counter the rise of inequality because it could be the source of destabilization. Growth periods should offer countries opportunities to build fiscal resources, impose fiscal discipline, provide stimulus through public investments that are controlled by long-term inflation. Such investments should consider green technologies.

Sixth, policymakers should consider the impact of technology on the global economy since new technologies have expanded the labour market by linking people from different countries without involving relocation of the workers or the technology, prompting new concerns

about inequality as well as “a labour-versus-labour problem, one pitting the interests of workers in advanced nations against the interests of workers in developing countries.” In reality, this is “a labour-versus-capital problem. Automation, the rise in robotics and the globalization of the labour market not only displaces labour, but it also replaces the earnings of workers with higher profits for corporations and the owners of machines.” The experts argue that to address this situation, policymakers should do this:

First, invest in human capital and increase skills in ways that complement technology and hence boost labour income, alongside the rise of technology. Second, create new instruments of income transfers within nations. The fall in the share of wages in GDP must not be treated as an inevitable consequence of the rise of technology. Governments have to create systems of taxes and profit-sharing to break this equivalence, and they have to create rules of the game—such as strong enforcement of competition laws and labour legislation—that enhance workers’ bargaining power and give them a greater voice in society and within firms. Finally, this creates a special need for multi-country policy-making. It places a responsibility on multilateral institutions to encourage policy harmonization across nations and to promote policies that take account of the interests of not just rich, industrialized nations, but also emerging economies, which are often deprived of voice in international decision-making.”

Seventh, governments should consider social norms in making fiscal policy in the same manner that private companies have studied and used social psychological principles and behaviour to promote their businesses. Eighth, consider the role and the place of global policies and the international community that make most of the roles as they place constraints because their monetary policies and financial regulations have a high impact on emerging economies as was the case in the economic downturn of 2008. The experts point out that policies on tax havens used

by low income nations to promote sustainable development, have an impact on exports and migration policies that affect citizens of low-income countries. Policies and regulations on tax havens affect the capacity of all countries, and especially low-income ones, to raise revenue to finance their policies for inclusive and sustainable development. Trade policies of one nation affect the export prospects for others. Migration policies in high-income countries affect the possibilities for citizens of low-income countries and their ability to send back remittances, and knowledge transfer to promote development in low-income countries. All this demonstrates that policies in one country affect others. International agreements can mitigate some of these challenges, but they are often difficult to negotiate, and when they have been worked out, some high-income countries may not follow through. Finally, if all nations work to balance market policies, the state, and the community, they can address the constraints imposed on the international community by the changing technology and turning it into sustainable development and shared prosperity.

Establishing a Suitable Climate for Development

For these types of processes to be undertaken efficiently today certain aspects of life in the political community are essential.²⁵ First, countries should work consciously to address the management of resources because resource management remains a challenge globally, but in our context “business as usual” which implies corruption or even misdirection of resources has devastating consequences. African countries have put in place anti-corruption measures, but from all indications, they have

²⁵ I am indebted to the Berkeley Center Programme on World Faiths and Development, especially its research on Kenya for identifying some of the central issues in faith and development. See Even Summary on Kenya, https://s3.amazonaws.com/berkeleycenter/141101WFDDWorkshopGlobal_DevelopmentReligionKenyaEventSummary.pdf [18.7.2017].

not been very effective. Second, for development to be effective, African governments must continue to promote peace and security. Take, for example, Boko Haram; it was reported on February 13, 2017, that the Governor of Borno State who was speaking at the annual Murtala Mohamad Lecture, estimated that Boko Haram had killed more than 100,000 people and 2,114,000 have been internally displaced.²⁶ Observers of the movement say that these numbers do not hold up and other estimates have it that Boko Haram has killed more than 200,000 people and more than 2.5 million people have been displaced because of the fighting.²⁷

Third, women and gender issues remain central to development now and for the future of our countries. The issues here start with the education of the girl child, the election and appointment of women to positions of responsibility, domestic and sexual violence, and with recognizing women's rights as human rights. Fourth, Africa's youth must be brought into the development process because they are present citizens and stakeholders and future leaders. While African governments have expanded educational opportunities, many things continue to place African youths at a disadvantage and slow the progress toward equitable development. Fifth, African states must continue to work with vulnerable populations, persons with disability, orphans, and with children who live in poverty. Religious institutions have done much work in this area, and several countries have registered great collaboration with faith communities, but more needs to be done. One of the significant achievements of religious organizations and the Ecumenical Initiative on HIV and AIDS, which Professor Ezra Chitando has led for the past several years, is the attention

²⁶ Sani Tukur, "Shocking Revelation: 100,000 killed, Two Million Displaced by Boko Haram Insurgency, Borno Governor Says," Abuja, *Premium Times*, Wednesday, July 19, 2017 [18.7.2017].

²⁷ See reports by www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/09/11-civilians-killed-boko-haram-attack-170902043943431.html [2.9.2017].

they have called to this issue. The African States cannot take their eyes off the radar on this issue. We have made excellent progress, but we are not out of the woods yet. Violence and war have increased disability among our youths and young people who were abducted and coerced to fight as child soldiers. Many of them have suffered devastating injuries that have left them disabled, and many continue to deal with mental disabilities due to post-traumatic stress disorders. Addressing these things must be on the development agenda.

Sixth, health remains a considerable challenge to development. In a context where more than 30 million have suffered and died from complications of the HIV infections, and where Malaria, Ebola, and a growing number of PWDs pose challenges to the families and drain the economic resources as well as the physical vitality and emotional health of the people, no development initiative is worth the paper on which it is written if it does not address the crucial health needs of the region. Let us not be naïve; part of the challenge here is that with health, we are also dealing with biomedical and pharmaceutical industries which we do not control. However, that is where priorities and choices come in.

Critical approaches to development that would enhance the wellbeing of PWDs must be conducted concerning local perspectives on human well-being and local values that enhance the achievement of well-being. In the rest of this chapter, I will discuss the services of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Service on leprosy treatment and argue that this was not merely a missionary mandate or healing for healing's sake, but a service that incorporated rehabilitation activities to enhance personal and social development. The promotion of disability treatment and human development is crucial because about 180 million Africans are living with various forms of disability. Addressing their needs must be part of a development paradigm that will include them as stakeholders and contributors to their personal and social wellbeing. Ignoring PWDs from

development programmes slows down economic development for them and the rest of the society.

Religion and Advocacy for Integrated Development

Religious organizations are key actors in international development through the many Faith-Based Organizations that serve different communities around the world. Empirical evidence shows that religious communities do contribute significantly to development and should be part of the conversation on the advancement of human and social well-being.²⁸ Although many scholars who write on development are skeptical of theological perspectives, because of the assumption that theology is a confessional enterprise, I argue that theological perspectives on development remain essential to the conversation if that perspective relates to the quest for justice and freedom. At the very best, I understand the notion that humanity is created in the image of God to include the physical, emotional, spiritual, and psychological dimensions of humanity. One must see all the dimensions of human life as part of the *imago Dei*.

First, the foundational mythos of creation states that the created order is good. The fundamental belief that the world and everything that is created is good raises questions about the need to distinguish between what is good and what is perfect. One could pose the question: What did the text mean by saying God created everything good? Why did some disorders emerge? Do the disorders, especially in relation to humanity, mean that the *imago Dei* is imperfect? Second, the imperative of the gospel invites critical thinking. Here there are several things to take into

²⁸ Gerrie ter Haar (ed), *Religion and Development: Ways of Transforming the World*, with Foreword by James D. Wolfensohn, London: Hurst & Co, 2011; Stephen Ellis, "Challenging the Secular: Religion and Public Spaces," in Barbara Bompani and Maria Frahm-Arp (eds), *Development and Politics from Below: Exploring Religious Spaces in the African State*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 23-39.

consideration. PWDs should not be targeted for conversion simply not because of their condition only, rather, they stand in need for the story of faith on the same grounds as anybody else.

Third, this calls for a rethinking of our ideas and attitudes towards PWDs. We share the same world with them and ought to build it together and must resist the temptation to see them as weak, unable, or people for whom we must plan and execute everything for them. Studies demonstrate that when PWDs are engaged in imagining, creating, and executing their ideas about life and the resources necessary to make that life meaningful, society benefits because more is planned and achieved.²⁹ It is essential to think of a theo-ethical understanding of personhood to cultivate a more comprehensive approach to disability. Bernd Wannenwetsch has argued that “the decisive point for an understanding of ‘persons’ is in the phenomenon of human kinship and the peculiar ‘positioned less’ of human life as being oriented towards a *Mitwelt* of other human beings that claim us by the sheer virtue of existence.”³⁰ Inclusion does not go far enough and instead leads us to maintain unintended distinctions between people and PWDs because “the disabled person must not be perceived as living at the margins, but at the center of any sound philosophy of personhood ... [and] they provide not just a test-case but the very paradigm for any recognition of any person.”³¹ He grounds the idea of personhood on *nomen dignitatis*. It reminds me of what the Wimbun people often say when they want to criticize an individual whose actions are often disagreeable and disrespectful of others, they say

²⁹ Roy McCloughry and Wayne Morris, *Making a World of Difference. Christian Reflections on Disability*, London: SPCK, 2002, p. 146.

³⁰ Bernd Wannenwetsch, “Angels with Clipped Wings: The Disabled as Key to the Recognition of Personhood,” in John Swinton and Brian Brock (eds), *Theology, Disability and the New Genetics: Why Science Needs the Church*, New York: T&T Clark, 2007, pp. 182-200.

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 184.

a nwe kah, meaning he is not a person. In other words, there is a moral import to the notion of personhood.

Wannenwetsch also turns to Spaeman's work on persons in which he demonstrates that personhood is not grounded on a subscription to certain *genus proximum*, but a *modus existendi* because a person is "a participant in a community of mutual recognition."³² This argument stresses individuals as persons who all belong to a community of persons where people belong to by birthright and all humanity have this as they are descended from one single individual sometime in the distant past. One cannot quickly assign biological facts to this, but we can infer cultural and social ideas which in turn impose moral obligations, and an important dimension of that is a dialogical relationship between people, because individuals have their nature and personhood in relating to that nature.³³ Personhood then is not constituted by what one has, but merely by being a person. Spaeman argues:

A disabled person may lack such properties. And it is those who lack them who constitute the paradigm for a human community of recognizing selves, rather than simply valuing useful or attractive properties. They evoke the best in human beings; they evoke the pure ground of human self-respect. What they give to humanity in this way by their demands on it is more than what they get.³⁴

Wannenwetsch develops a theological idea and makes the connection between persons to the creation account when Eve is presented to Adam. Adam recognizes her as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. This recognition implies that one acknowledges that the other person is

³² Ibid, p. 186.

³³ Ibid, p. 187.

³⁴ Quoted in Ibid, p. 187; See Robert Spaeman, *Personen: Versuch über den Unterschied zwischen 'etwas' und 'jemand,'* Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1996, p. 261. Trans. Bernd Wannenwetsch.

created in the image of God and that the image consists of body and spirit.³⁵ However, the argument here is that all persons should be treated equally because the doctrine of creation demonstrates that all people are connected. However, in times of challenges and stress, humans tend to make distinctions which categorize and put the lives of others at risk by limiting the idea that all humans belong to one family. According to Wannenwetsch, “to live in a family and learn to recognize those who belong to it is an elemental and elementary schooling in recognition of personhood.”³⁶

This recognition then should guide the way we relate to those living with disabilities. Their lives remind us of our interconnectedness because they are part of us. By conveying this message about our interconnectedness, they are also angels, messengers of God to us. They too are human and have a message for us. We should not romanticize them or consider them better than others, even if we must recognize that they have a special message for us by being who they are. As angels, they may have disabled wings, but the messages they convey reflect our state of dependency because of the kinship we share with them. However, as Wannenwetsch argues, the angels live among us with clipped wings, and cannot fly like us. We must share our lives with them and it is here that the concept of personhood when understood from the perspective of kinship, illuminates our relations with PWDs, and we are then invited not to fear or treat them in a condescending manner, but to work with them and learn from them. If we check our own alienation and address it, we can no longer be shocked by PWDs, nor can we see them only as weaklings who stand in

³⁵ See Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall: A Theological Exposition of Genesis 1-3*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2004.

³⁶ Bernd Wannenwetsch, “Angels with Clipped Wings: The Disabled as Key to the Recognition of Personhood” in John Swinton and Brian Brock (eds), *Theology, Disability and the New Genetics: Why Science Needs the Church*, New York: T&T Clark, 2007, p. 191.

need of our sympathy and charity, but they address the anxieties that hinder us from seeing PWDs as angels on a mission to help build our human and social relations.

At the end of his chapter, Wannenwetsch highlights an account in Kenzaburo Oë's novel *A Personal Matter* in which the protagonist contemplates escaping to Africa and abandon his wife and newborn baby because that baby is disabled.³⁷ He cannot bring himself to do that and returns to the hospital and determines to live his life with his wife and child and as he looked at his baby he tried to reflect his face from the baby's. He then begins to see a new face, and he starts to see his son's face better because it is no longer the disfigured face but his son with whom he must share his life. "The transformation emerges from the spiritual sphere of the *Mitwelt* ... [suggesting] that the recognition of personhood, although its subject matter is precisely the shared human nature as such, is at least at times, beyond the natural capacity of the individuals concerned."³⁸ What occurs in the hospital room between a father and a disabled son is *Ubuntu*, the recognition that we are all interconnected and have a shared responsibility in recognizing personhood as an interrelated ideal and mode of being in the world. What makes this idea compelling is that *Ubuntu* as an independent idea, which is not necessarily a theological concept, but a communal ethic grounded in African sensitivities, coheres with the notion of personhood as Wannenwetsch articulates.

Ubuntu as an ethic comes with distinctions. The first distinction is the very fact that people are created differently, even if they share so much

³⁷ Kenzaburo Oë, *A Personal Matter*, trans. John Nathan, New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1969.

³⁸ Bernd Wannenwetsch, "Angels with Clipped Wings: The Disabled as Key to the Recognition of Personhood," in John Swinton and Brian Brock (eds), *Theology, Disability and the New Genetics: Why Science Needs the Church*, New York: T&T Clark, 2007, pp. 194-195.

in common. Second, *Ubuntu* is not only a relational ideal but a responsible disposition. If a person is a person because of others, it implies that one does what persons do; in other words, one ought to assume responsibility in the face of the other since personhood is understood and made meaningful in the face of the other. One, therefore, has responsibilities to the other and to his or herself to make the inter-world work for the self and the other. Responsibility for the other therefore is an obligation that *Ubuntu* proposes to individual and communal living. Responsibility involves recognizing that we share the same space with PWDs who themselves are responsible individuals who have so much to give to the community.

Personhood and *ubuntu* then offer compelling reasons for theologians to recommend that disability must be part of a broad development agenda for the nation. To demonstrate that such a development can and should be imagined, we will examine the work of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services to see an example of how disability services have laid the groundwork for personal and social development and could be used as a model in other aspects of economic development.

Disability and Development: Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services

Leprosy and its Treatment in Africa

The bacteria *Mycobacterium leprae* causes leprosy or Hansen's Disease. It affects the skin and nerves of humans and if not treated can cause severe damage and in some cases loss of limbs and other body deformities. Globally, it is estimated that about 214,000 people are diagnosed with leprosy with about 60% of them in India, and many who receive

treatment promptly become free of the disease.³⁹ Irene Brightmer has argued that the biomedical encounter between Europeans and Africans led to constructions of leprosy as a “different” type of disease.⁴⁰ In Ghana, David Patterson argued that “because of the fear and revulsion it evoked in Europeans, [leprosy] attracted much more attention than its public health importance or the possibilities for successful therapy could justify.”⁴¹ Other illnesses that make up the big five according to Brightmer are yellow fever, typhus fever, small pox and cholera because they posed medical, social, and economic challenges in many African countries in the past.⁴² However, today these have been outpaced by HIV/AIDS, malaria, and Ebola. State officials did not pay much attention to leprosy and in many cases turned over its treatment to mission organizations; this might have opened the door for biblical images that stigmatized persons afflicted with the disease.

The work on leprosy by Catholics in the Ogoja area in Nigeria was supported by Irish Catholics missionaries, Sisters of Charity for health and later Medical Missionaries of Mary.⁴³ Early treatment centers were started at Itu and Mar in Northern Nigeria. Dr. Harry Hastings started

³⁹ <https://www.lepra.org.uk/faqsleprosy?gclid=CPultczFjdUCFUQq0wod8p4Hew> [16.7.2017].

⁴⁰ M.I. Brightmer, *The Spatial Pattern of Leprosy on the Cross-River Region of Nigeria*, PhD, Liverpool, 1994, pp. 64-65.

⁴¹ K.D. Patterson, *Health in Colonial Ghana: Disease, Medicine and Socio-Economic Change, 1900-1955*, Waltham, MA: Crossroads, 1981, p. 73.

⁴² M.I. Brightmer, *The Spatial Pattern of Leprosy on the Cross-River Region of Nigeria*, PhD, Liverpool, 1994, p. 65 note 6.

⁴³ John Manton, “Administering Leprosy Control in Ogoja Province, Nigeria, 1945-67: A Case Study in Government-Mission Relations,” in David Hardiman (ed), *Healing Bodies, Saving Souls: Medical Missions in Asia and Africa*, New York: Rodopi, 2006, pp. 307-331.

leprosy work at a hospital in the Ogoja Province in the late 1920s.⁴⁴ Leprosy settlements were established based on the local ethnic composition of the region where incidents of leprosy were reported at 7 per thousand, or about 5,000 for a population of 725,000.

Joint Ventures with the State

In 1956, the colonial government agreed to collaborate with the Roman Catholic Mission in Eastern Nigeria, and a government-financed and Catholic-run hospital opened at Ikom.⁴⁵ The state provided £25,000 of the total amount it took to build the facilities. The Catholic Mission provided places for the staff, supervised the construction of the building, and provided housing for the essential staff. At the inauguration of the hospital, the Minister of Health for Eastern Nigeria, Dr. Michael Okpara stated that the hospital had been given to the Catholic Mission to ensure that it would be run efficiently as part of a government-led initiative to provide health care with an emphasis on preventive care and on combating leprosy.⁴⁶ The Ogoja scheme included a hospital, leper village, leper asylum, a home, two physicians, two nurses, laboratory technician, and clerks.⁴⁷ Promotional materials published by the mission included testimonies and expressions of gratitude from current and former patients. The Sisters organized an adoption programme for people to adopt and care for the children of lepers in the region. The priest worked to eliminate the stigmatization of leprosy in the region. The Medical Missionaries of Mary fused medical work with the pastoral work of the Catholic

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 312.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 307.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 308.

⁴⁷ Ibid, pp. 314-315.

Church, and their work was documented in a film in 1947, *Visitation: The Film Story of Medical Missionaries of Mary*.⁴⁸

From a development perspective, the Medical Missionaries of Mary not only evangelized and treated leprosy but engaged in the transfer of technology, medical and technical skills to change the social order. The work in the region housed between 2,336 to 8,100 patients in 1949-1954, and there were about 32,000 consultations during the same period. An expert advisory council on leprosy was established in Lagos to advise the government on coordinating and addressing the leprosy problem in the country. They opted to use sulphones and in particular diamino diphenyl sulphone (DADPS) to treat leprosy in Nigeria. The treatment was to be coordinated in different provinces, and both central and provincial governments were to provide funds for leprosy treatment, and the colonial government would allocate funds according to the rate of incidence in the region.⁴⁹ Government grants would also be provided to support rehabilitative activities to train patients to weave crafts and carry out farming activities. When Nigeria gained independence in 1960, the Catholics in the Ogoja Province were concerned that communist ideals could spread in Nigeria. Catholics were also concerned that the increasing American presence in the area might also lead to the promotion of family planning and weaken Catholic families. One way to address these concerns was to increase Catholic services by building additional Catholic hospitals and training the African staff in all areas including clergy.

⁴⁸ See A. Buchanan, *Visitation: The Film Story of the Medical Missionaries of Mary*, Drogheda: Medical Missionaries of Mary, 1948, Reference taken from John Manton, "Administering Leprosy Control in Ogoja Province, Nigeria, 1945-67: A Case Study in Government-Mission Relations," David Hardiman (ed), *Healing Bodies, Saving Souls: Medical Missions in Asia and Africa*, New York: Rodopi, 2006, p. 329 (note 46).

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 317.

Leprosy Treatment: The Beginning of Disability Services in the CBCHS

Early treatment of leprosy in the then Bamenda Province of Southern Cameroon was complicated. Because of the prevalence of leprosy in the region, primarily in Kedjom Keku, Kidjo Ketinguh in Kwighe Quarter which is near Sabga Pass, the town of Bambili, the colonial government had set up a leper colony as they were called in those days in Bamenda. Mildred Schneider, missionary to Cameroon, wrote an account of the beginnings of the Leprosy Center in which she offered the day-to-day account of this venture of faith by the North American Baptist Mission and their Cameroonian counterpart.⁵⁰ Kent Maynard has argued: “Patients were isolated and only fed by others with the disease. The weariness of Hanson’s disease was extreme in the Grassfields and persisted well into the 1950s when new biomedicine finally brought the disease under control. The first ‘leper colonies’ (later called ‘settlements’) began in Bamenda under the British about 1927, including a small settlement at Nso.”⁵¹ The government treatment facilities were transferred to the North American Baptist Mission which had opened its leprosy treatment center in 1952 and called it the Bamenda New Hope Settlement. Maynard argues that in setting up its treatment center, both the government and mission did not consider local treatment options, but this joint venture in treating what was a dreaded disease helped transform medicine and other precolonial practices in this region of Cameroon.⁵² Although the colonial state established what Maynard describes as “bush type” hospitals, Christian mission organizations (Roman Catholics, the

⁵⁰ See Mildred M. Schneider, *Mbingo: the Founding of the Bamenda New Hope Settlement 1952-1961*, Portland, Oregon, np, 2000.

⁵¹ Kent Maynard, *Making Kedjom Medicine: A History of Public Health and Well-Being in Cameroon*, Westport: Praeger, 2004, p. 140.

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 174.

Basel Mission, and the North American Baptist) established dispensaries, and hospitals in the region, contributing to the takeoff of biomedicine in the region.⁵³

The Cameroon Baptist Mission, now Cameroon Baptist Convention, considered the need to start leprosy treatment in 1952 when the Colonial District Commissioner asked that Baptist Mission to take over leprosy treatment in the Bamenda region.⁵⁴ Missionary Laura Reddig, who had arrived in Cameroon in 1938, was asked by the Government Medical Officer at Bamenda to do a survey to determine the rate of prevalence.⁵⁵ The North American Baptist General Conference approved its mission board to start leprosy work in Cameroon. Laura Reddig was selected to travel to the Uzuakili Leprosy Centre in Nigeria, (accompanied by fellow Missionary Margaret Killtlitz), to receive training on the treatment and running of a leprosy center under Dr. Frank Davey of the training center, who later visited Cameroon and urged that treatment start immediately.⁵⁶ Dr. Davey estimated that it would take a long time to eliminate leprosy because the incubation period for the disease could be as long as twenty years, but if things worked well, Cameroon could be leprosy free in twenty years. As with many predictions, this did not turn out to be the case.

When Laura Reddig returned to Cameroon, a treatment center called the Bamenda New Hope Settlement was started. Treatment was launched on June 10, 1952. Reddig dispensed the first Diamino-Diphenyl-Sulphone (DDS) at a treatment event that was preceded by a short devotion and

⁵³ Ibid, p. 175.

⁵⁴ Edward D. Hughes, *Love them for me Laura*, Roseville, CA: North American Baptist Conference, 1985, p. 68.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Pius Muffih Tih, *A History of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board 1936-1996*, Bamenda, Cameroon: Unique Printers, 1996, pp. 50-51.

prayer by Donald Ganstrom, the Field Secretary of the Cameroon Baptist Mission at Bamenda. As she gave the pills to each of the 120 patients, Reddig said: "I'm giving you this medicine in Jesus' name. Believe He will make you well."⁵⁷

The beginning of the leprosy treatment marked the provision of care with a difference, and we can describe that difference as an integrated approach to care that would heal patients and enable them to function actively in the community and provide for themselves. Those who received treatment that day were all registered and received a monthly financial supplement from the government to buy food and take care of other needs. The government nurse also treated the patients' ulcers.⁵⁸ The Cameroon Baptist Mission acquired land at Mbingo I, and the Bamenda New Hope Settlement was relocated to Mbingo and settled on 28,000 acres of land which "is bounded on the west by Mbingo II, on the East by Baingo and Ndawara, on the South by Kedjom-Keku and the North by Fungeh-Kom."⁵⁹ Reverend Gilbert Schneider and Mildred Schneider directed the construction of the hospital complex.⁶⁰

The New Hope Settlement was moved from Bamenda to Mbingo. Patients arrived from all over the country. After the establishment of a treatment hospital at Mbingo, leprosy was called in the English-speaking part of Cameroon "Mbingo" because it was at this Baptist hospital where people with Hanson's disease were treated. However, despite the prevail-

⁵⁷ Edward D. Hughes, *Love them for me Laura*, p. 69.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Pius Muffih Tih, *A History of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board 1936-1996*, Bamenda, Cameroon: Unique Printers, 1996, p. 49.

⁶⁰ Mildred M. Schneider, *Mbingo: The Founding of the Bamenda New Hope Settlement 1952-1961*, Portland Oregon, np, 2000. See Schneider's Diary Entry for April 8, 1952.

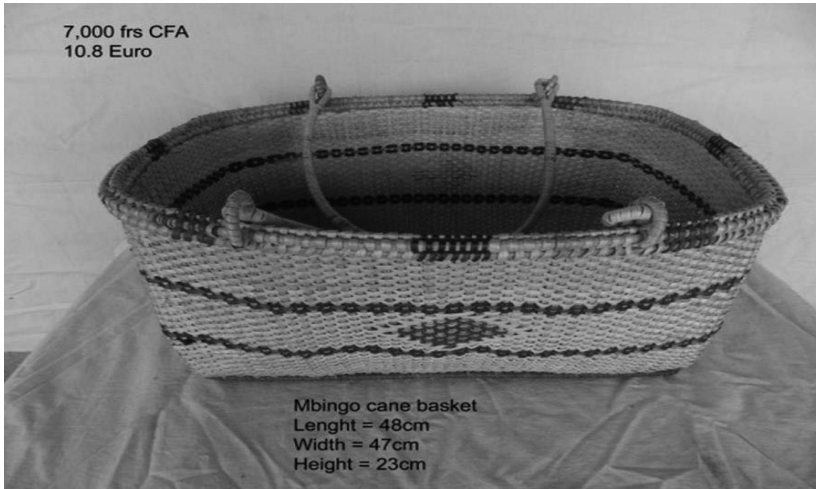
ing stigma, people began to flock to the hospital because of the effectiveness of the treatment and the comprehensive nature of the work done there. For the Baptist Mission, Mbingo (or the Bamenda New Hope Settlement) marked the beginning of a new way of caring for people who were suffering from leprosy and its resulting disabilities. In its early days, Mbingo hospital was expanded to include facilities to admit other patients, but its core mission remains the treatment of leprosy. The hospital administration established a workshop at Mbingo to provide rehabilitation services to the patients and later manufacture wheelchairs and tricycles and improve the mobility of patients.

The current director of disability services for the CBCHS argues that the goal of the church was to provide care, show compassion, and Christian love to all who needed treatment regardless of their religious status. The people who came to Mbingo needed treatment and a place where they could feel at home. The patients worked two days of the week, more so as therapy and part of the treatment because it gave the patients something to claim credit for. As the number of patients grew, they were organized into a community with their leaders and a council to settle complaints and disputes. They also started a self-help bank for residents to save money for needy days because they earned income from the work they did while at the settlement. These activities were instituted to give the members of the community vocational skills. These measures were undertaken to provide comprehensive care in that context and make the patients active and productive members of the society and thus strengthen their dignity as contributing members of the society. It is for that reason that the treatment at Mbingo expanded to address vision, mobility, and an extensive education programme that informed people on prevention, treatment, and the services that promoted rehabilitation. Such rehabilitation required that residents at Mbingo be taught vocational skills so that they will be able to make a living.

Disability Treatment and Vocational Training

The treatment of leprosy at Mbingo was an exercise of self-enhancement and human development because its services included the training of residents to remain active and work to support themselves. To accomplish this, the community sent a representative to Nigeria to study the art of making cane baskets. He returned and taught the other members of the community who embraced this art as part of their treatment and rehabilitation. Mbingo crafts, especially basketry, became a defining symbol of Mbingo Hospital. The extensive work of rehabilitation trained current and former patients to produce things. The patients undergoing rehabilitation were moved from the hospital room to a village not too far away from the hospital where they produced crafts for personal use and the market. One of the early products of this endeavor that charmed the public was the basket produced at Mbingo, and till today it is still called Mbingo Basket, made out of cane and beautifully decorated.⁶¹

⁶¹ Image taken from an add placed online by the Presbyterian bookstore. See <https://www.google.com/search?q=Mbingo+Basket&rls=com.microsoft:en-US:IE-Address> [11.7.2017].



In addition to the crafts, younger patients and the children of patients received education at Mbingo, demonstrating that Mbingo was designed to offer medical services and address disability holistically.

The staff of the CBCHS emphasize that the notion of the community remains at the center of their work. The patients are treated as stakeholders in their treatment through their participation in the decision-making processes. Such a treatment of patients has contributed significantly to the building of their self-esteem and sense of worth as the patients participate in planning and executing projects that affect their own lives. These activities change the public's perception of the patients because they are not seen as weaklings who depend on the assistance of others. The stigma that accompanied the disease and made it even trying to recruit workers and food vendors is apparently in retreat.

The remarkable successes achieved by the Baptists and other Mission organizations in the region were lauded both by a triumphalist discourse

by missionaries and locals who praised the mission work in the area for introducing civilization. Maynard argues: "In Kedjom many elderly men and women are immensely proud of the early church and its role in promoting change.⁶² In their own words, Christianity has been the primary vehicle for lifting Grassfields societies out of a 'benighted,' 'uncivilized,' and 'bush' existence."⁶³ Through these changes, Mission and Church agencies continued to maintain an ambivalent attitude towards local herbal medicines even though the predominant attitude was to promote biomedicine and dismiss local forms of treatments even though with time and education a balanced approach began to take hold as the influence and impact of local healers continued to grow, especially in the decades of the 1970s when Cameroonians began to promote the work of traditional doctors, whom had formed a national association.

The remarkable accomplishment of the CBCHS demonstrates that treatment and rehabilitation open doors to a definite integration of PWDs into the community to participate in personal and social development. From a theological perspective, the work done by the CBCHS is part of the core mission of the ecclesial community. Medical work in Cameroon was part of the overall strategy of evangelism. The decisions made by missionaries on the field like Dr. Paul Gebauer and Dr. George Dunger stressed the importance of medical work as part of the overall strategy of evangelism. Pius Tih, the influential Director of the Baptist Health Services argued:

The Missionaries got involved in medical missions to continue with the task Christ had left them. They got involved in healing the sick because Christ healed. Medical missions followed only as one of the Christian duties to follow Christ's example ... Medical missions have the ministry of Jesus as its foundation ... Medical missions are not just a social

⁶² Kent Maynard, *Making Kedjom Medicine: A History of Public Health and Well-Being in Cameroon*, Westport: Praeger, 2004, p. 224.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

service. It is a ministry of the church conducted in obedience to the call of Jesus for his disciples to be like him, to feed his sheep, to visit the sick, to do whatever he has commanded.”⁶⁴

Mbingo became a full-fledged general hospital in 1965 but continued to offer services in its specialization, leprosy treatment. Today its expanded services include “general nursing, eye surgery, general surgery, orthopedic surgery, ear, nose & throat (ENT) surgery, surgical and internal medicine residency programmes, vocational training and rehabilitation.”⁶⁵ Mbingo has built on the experience of treating leprosy patients to develop a holistic approach to health and disability through its physiotherapy and prosthetic treatment and services. Since people affected by leprosy often lost parts of their body, the hospital staff early on provided services which enabled patients to function and remain creative. The hospital provided prostheses to help restore functions to parts of the body which leprosy had destroyed. Most of the equipment that is used is built on location at the hospital. Mbingo today serves as a major referral hospital in the West and Central African Region.

Conclusion

The account that I have given of the work of the CBC Health Services is just one example of why religious communities should include in the work they do the issue of disability as part of the broad strategy of development in their respective countries. I conclude by indicating that there is a strong history of development in the Christian tradition throughout Africa. One could cite other examples from Africa, but suffice it to mention that the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the

⁶⁴ Pius Muffih Tih, *A History of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board 1936-1996*, Bamenda, Cameroon: Unique Printers, 1996.

⁶⁵ CBC Health Services, www.cbchealthservices.org/html/mbingo.html [12.7. 2017].

World Council of Churches (WCC) and partners like Bread for the World have a long history of engagement in development as they have worked to balance faith and order, and life and work. Since its inception in 1963, the AACC has worked to create a climate for wholesome development on the continent, by supporting the quest for liberation in Southern Africa, peace and security in Sudan, and gender equality and equity, to name only a few examples. Therefore, calling on the ecclesial community to extend its advocacy on disability by working to include it in the development agenda of African countries, invites the Christian community and its theologians to retrace the path they have blazed in Africa for more many decades of social engagement through the gospel and mission of the ecclesial community. The AACC and the WCC have done this work because member churches did not see a need to separate what it means to be spiritual with social development.⁶⁶

The debate is compelling today because, without a comprehensive strategy that takes into consideration all human potential, social efforts to promote development will be undercut by poverty because programmes ignore PWDs in planning for development. The ecclesial community has demonstrated that it can be a partner and must act as partners in development by promoting a perspective of the *imago Dei* which sees all human beings as partners in development.

⁶⁶ Gerrie ter Haar, "Religion and Development: Introducing a New Debate," in Gerrie ter Haar (ed), *Religion and Development: Ways of Transforming the World*, London: Hurst, 2011, pp. 19-20.

Chapter 9

Views of Selected Theology Trainers and Trainees from Zimbabwean Universities on the Implementation of Disability Mainstreaming as a Development Initiative

Phillipa Mutswanga

Introduction

There has been a plethora of meetings, workshops, conferences, calls for papers by educationists, professors and theologians on the relevance of disability mainstreaming and drafting of possible curricula. Equally, WCC, Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) and other member institutions, such as ATISCA, have committed themselves to spearhead the disability mainstreaming advocacy with a view to promote the socio-economic status of Southern African countries, including Zimbabwe, the focus of this study. The findings of this study are expected to give global insights to all theology and religious training institutions in the world. For the Southern Region, ATISCA has played a great role by showing its commitment through such meetings, workshops and conferences with a view to addressing the matter from an informed perspective. The ATISCA resource book published in 2016 together with EDAN calls for the common good for all and to also show emotional and social intelligence towards various conditions of disability and the concerned people with disabilities (PWDs). Mainstreaming the issue of disability is a strategy for achieving equality and equity for all

people. This chapter explores issues that ought to be put into consideration by religious and theological trainers and trainees in order to successfully mainstream disability in their teaching and learning institutions for development purposes and further. Thus, the study critically examined how the proposed theology and religious studies Disability in Africa Resource Book and any other materials could be utilized to successfully mainstream disability in religious and theological studies and how that can enhance sustainable development initiatives in Southern Africa and even globally. This empirical study was therefore developed pursuant to the several conferences held on interlinks between religious or theological studies and disability.

Background to the Problem and Related Literature

The current realization that issues of disability impinge on our social and economic development is a driving force for space creation for disability mainstreaming in theological education and all other disciplines. According to the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD), any development prospects or on-going activities are likely to fail to fully achieve their transformational goals where disability mainstreaming links are absent. How then, can universities remain the hub of knowledge if some of their disciplines do not meaningfully address this global concern? The realization that disability permeates all life circles demonstrates that it does not have boundaries. In other words, disability is everywhere once you know how to look for it, as enunciated.¹ A survey by Pfeifler and Yoshida showed that not a single Disability Studies course was taught under the sponsorship of a religious studies programme or department in 1993, and not much is

¹ K. Wynn, "Embracing Disability in Teaching Religion," *American Academy of Religion (AAR)* 20, (3), 2005.

reported to have changed to-date.² The reason for mainstreaming disability studies into almost any subject including teaching of the Bible is likely to help people with disability become aware of how their bodies are conceptualized, disempowered and valued by societies.³ Disability studies deserve attention as any other course in biblical studies.

The gap between disability and international development seems to be a result of the traditional view which regards them as separate fields, making development policy, planning and programming fail to take account of disability issues. The 2000 Millennium Framework is criticized for excluding disability in the development plans, despite the publication of a much-cited World Bank-commissioned paper in 1999 which from an informed study presented that 20% of the world's poor were disabled.⁴ Despite the emergence of new frameworks, disability continues to be seen as a misfortune and blame shifts seem to continue to prevail.⁵ A study on Kazakhstan universities equally noted similarities and proposes that the current teaching Religious Studies in higher education institutions could benefit from it.⁶ Both studies stress that the voices of people with disabilities (PWDs) are essential to prompt more inclusive programmes that address key issues from an informed background. It is against this background that existing theological training

² D. Pfeifler and K. Yoshida, "Teaching Disability Studies in Canada and the USA," *Disability and Society*, 10, (40), 1995.

³ H. Avalos, "New Bodies of Knowledge: Disability Studies and Teaching Biblical Studies," *Religious Studies News - AAR Edition*, Belgrade, Maine: Iowa State University, 2006.

⁴ World Report on Disability, 2011.

⁵ E. Bayingana, "The Church's Evangelizing Mission to the Mentally Handicapped," in *African Ecclesial Review*, 5, 2002.

⁶ Y. Kartabayeva, B. Solt'yeyeva and B. Beisegulova, "Teaching Religious Studies as an Academic Discipline in Higher Education Institutions of Kazakhstan," in *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 214, 2015, pp. 290-296.

programmes are sometimes described as *cities on hills*, inaccessible to both PWDs and the theology of disability. Churches and theology training programmes are therefore encouraged to stop pretending to be at the forefront of managing disability issues and concerns while failing to recognize its mainstreaming at their training centres.

However, as nuanced earlier, the two are now gradually coming together, with a growing acceptance that global development targets cannot be achieved unless disability as a cross-cutting priority issue, in much the same way as gender has been for many years now. The recently unveiled post-2015 development framework reflects this aspiration, with targets relating to five of the seventeen sustainable development goals explicitly referring to disability. This shift has come about largely through the efforts of disabled people themselves, who have articulated their own experiences and challenged society to be more flexible and accommodative, such as proposed in the 1981 Disabled People's International Network in collaboration with the United Nations (UN). That further gave birth to several major international agreements, including the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). It provides a legally binding international framework to protect the rights of disabled people by placing them on a more equal footing with other social groups within society, which Zimbabwe ratified in September 2013. Disability mainstreaming is therefore a follow up to this. For disability mainstreaming to take place in whatever sector, be it in theological education, society itself needs to be radically reshaped by dismantling all disabling barriers, such as stigmatizing attitudes and beliefs, inaccessible infrastructure and discriminatory processes that hinder disability mainstreaming in Theology and Religious Studies programmes.⁷

⁷ D. Cobley, "Disability and Development, Professional Development Reading Pack," *Applied Knowledge Services*, 2013, www.gsdr.org [7.9.2017].

This study aims to allay fears causing some institutions to delay the mainstreaming of disability in their religious and theological studies programmes. The study further aims to continue to encourage Faculties and Departments of Religion and Theology through signposting ways of implementation and the relevance of disability mainstreaming to development. Globally, there is a growing desire to revise the curricula of theologians as exemplified by the EDAN calls, so that theology studies embrace an inclusive community where issues of disability are fully accommodated and to create disability friendly learning climates which pave way for development for all society. Several organizations and institutions are holding conferences and workshops to sell the idea and obtain more information on the underlying phenomenon. Furthermore, the desire created several joint international workshops by the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) and other interested organizations, one of which was planned for 2003 in Geneva; one in 2004 in Nairobi and another in 2006 at Ashirvad to affirm the importance of including the disability discourse in the curriculum of theological institutions in order to see people with disability as dignified full community members and with a view to develop a meaningful and accommodative theology training.

Such literature reflects where the phenomenon under study has come from, its struggles and achievements thus far and celebrates today as disability traverses theological and religious studies as evidenced by interest of religious and theology scholars to explore the two as interdisciplinary.⁸ This study aims to match the United Nations adaptation in The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) where the global need to uphold equitable standards

⁸ Deborah Beth Creamer, *Disability and Christian Theology: Embodied Limits and Constructive Possibilities*, Oxford: Oxford Scholarship, 2008.

to PWDs is affirmed. The aim was to ensure that pragmatic nondiscriminatory and inclusive ways were used in educational practices, training centres and pedagogical matters, not sparing Theology and Religious Studies programmes.⁹ This study was then, carried out to ascertain the observed strengths, gaps and challenges in implementing disability mainstreaming at theological training centres. The study therefore attempts to provide possible strategies which theology trainers could employ in order to produce sensitive disability mainstreaming trainees who can further disseminate the same knowledge to other people until the issue becomes central in all theology and religious studies programmes. Such trainers are likely able to give practical guidance on teaching students with disabilities and reinforce the recognition of religion and disability as a sub-discipline within religious studies which deserves to be treated as a distinct and legitimate academic enquiry and also provide more disability mainstreaming implementation tips to the existing curricula.

According to my knowledge, most Zimbabwean societies regard churches as the best custodians of issues of disability, though the area still has a dearth of knowledge. As such, Bible centres and universities offering religious and theology programmes continue to expect churches to play a leading role in addressing any anomalies faced by members in society. Its noted absence by The Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) and a follow up to that by ATISCA gave birth to the launch of the Resource Book entitled *Disability in Africa for Theology and Religious Studies* in 2016. ATISCA's move was in response to the realization of the continued absence of mainstreaming disability in religious and theological studies syllabi. Despite these calls, disability mainstreaming implementation seems to remain significantly excluded in most theology training programmes at universities.

⁹ K. Wynn, "Embracing Disability in Teaching Religion," *American Academy of Religion (AAR)*, 20 (3), 2005.

Though PWDs are heterogeneous, the conventions consider them as a de facto group entitled to the fundamental human rights for all. In line with global trends regarding people with disabilities, Zimbabwe swiftly promulgated policies to ensure the inclusion of previously marginalized pupils in both primary and secondary schools, but without paying attention to universities and colleges.¹⁰ Though policies have been easy to craft, a major challenge remains that the policies have not been translated into tangible transformational approaches in the primary school teacher education curriculum, the situation is worse in religious and theology programmes and that necessitated the development of this study with a focus on Zimbabwean Universities offering such programmes. In support, Otieno affirms that the traditional pre-Christian way of life was equally averse to any form of disability and while the post-Christian period took it as charity model though it later on evolved to the social model.¹¹ Since society is controlled by its culture and belief systems such ways of considering PWDs have not been easy to shake off by people in general and theologians in particular despite the paradigm shifts towards disability issues.

An overview of how some biblical scholars conceptualized disability and how that influenced their perspectives towards it is important to help understand issues in this study. That is likely to further help diagnose disability in modern contemporary terms. The Bible highlights blindness, deafness, dumbness, leprosy, and paralysis as the most common disabilities affecting people during all levels of development including the old

¹⁰ V. Jenjekwa, E. Rutoro, and J. Runyowa, "Inclusive Education and the Primary School Teacher Education Curriculum in Zimbabwe: The Need for a Paradigm Shift," *The International Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*, 2013.

¹¹ A.P. Otieno, "Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Disability: Implications on the Rights of Persons with Disability in Kenya," *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 29(4), 2009, <http://dx.doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v29i4>.

age. For example, in Genesis 27:1; 48:10; 1 Sam 3:2 and 4:15; 1 Kings 14:4 the Bible respectively mentions prominent people such as Isaac; Jacob; Eli and Alijah the Shilonite as individuals whose eyesight had failed in old age. Disability is attributed to God. Some of the Old Testament authors viewed God as a bringer of disability for the disobedient and transgressors. Similarly, in 2 Chron. 26:16-23, we read the story of King Uzziah who, because of his unfaithfulness to God, was struck by leprosy "because the Lord had afflicted him."¹² Uzziah lived in a separate house and was excluded from the temple of the Lord because PWDs were not allowed into the temple.

The New Testament also supports the link between sin and disability as illustrated in John 9:1-3 where the disciples expressed a similar anticipation when they questioned Jesus who had sinned, the man or the parent for being born blind. In John 5:14 Jesus forewarns the healed physically impaired man who lay by the pool of Bethesda not to sin anymore. All that is controversially interpreted from a carnal view and not spiritual perspective which seems to promote stigma and discrimination against PWDs, while all this was meant to reveal the divine manifestation. Eiesland discusses disability rights through the lens of a liberation theology of disability where the concept of a disabled God is contextualized Christology, representing the relationship which challenges the oppressive structures and beliefs towards disability and theology.¹³

Island's liberatory theology of disability is one of justice and inclusion of PWDs to transform the structures which negatively affects PWDs. The argument is that the healing narratives in the Biblical texts were not meant to portray negative views towards disability but give insight into viewing theology as liberatory rather than discriminatory. This is

¹² 2 Chronicles 26:20.

¹³ N.L. Eiesland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994.

supported by Christ's mission on earth and also in the Nazareth manifesto which is spelt out clearly in Matthew 11:2-5 and Luke 4: 18-19 and supports a liberative theology where he declared the spirit of the Lord to have anointed him to preach the good news to the poor; proclaim freedom for the prisoners and the recovery of sight for the blind and to release the oppressed. All this reveals that Jesus sacrificed his life for people living on the fringe of society such as PWDs. These are emancipatory Biblical and theological views on disability.

Although much work still remains on the phenomenon under study, and taking into account other related studies, integrating disability into religious studies and the theological education curricula and pedagogy is under reinforcement.¹⁴ It is against this background that this study seeks to establish the status of disability studies through a qualitative exploration of the teaching experiences of selected university educationists in addressing disability issues.

The Theology of Reconciliation

The reconciliation conceptual framework guides this study by selecting related key principles and frames of references that give insights into the phenomenon under study. The term reconciliation is rooted in the Latin word *reconciliare*, 're' referring to again, while '*conciliare*' refers to make friendly. Reconciliation is a societal process involving mutual acknowledgement of past ways, behaviours and attitudes and to make room for the re-building of positive relationships.¹⁵ This framework is appropriate because of its emphasis on moral values which is a core value for a theology of reconciliation. In this study the framework encourages the Zimbabwean institutions of higher education (Universities) to bury

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ L. Radzik, *Making Amends: Atonement in Morality, Law and Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2009.

their past reasons for the reluctance to mainstream disability issues. Thus, based on the trainees' summarized views, it is time that all universities offering religious and theological programmes mainstream disability as a development for all core course. Thus, these issues should complement each other since the religious ideology of reconciliation embodies forgiveness; changing past life patterns; mutual recognition; acceptance and the human rights approach. In other words, after several consultations with PWDs, universities ought to re-build their past relationship through mainstreaming disability in theology programmes. Such actions are expected to give hope, harmony and human-ness and increase collaboration between people with and without disabilities. Reconciliation denotes restoration and allowing improved relationships to give the concerned groups equal status in all sectors including development initiatives.¹⁶

Problem Statement

In Zimbabwe, societal perceptions generally take churches as the custodians of issues of disability; thus, Bible centres and universities offering religious and theological programmes continue to expect churches to play a leading role in addressing any anomalies faced by members in society, yet mainstreaming disability seems to remain absent from their programmes. EDAN equally realized the absence of disability mainstreaming in the syllabi of training centres offering religion and theological studies.

Aims and Objectives

This study aims to be instrumental in evading a flawed religious interpretation of disability by helping to bring about a situation where people with disabilities are seen and treated on equal spiritual footing in Zimbabwe. In other words, trainers and their trainees in this field are expected

¹⁶ Ibid.

to produce ambassadors for the mainstreaming of disability into religious and theological programmes as emphasized by EDAN. The goal of the study is to analyze views of selected university theology trainers and trainees on the implementation of disability mainstreaming as a development initiative in Zimbabwe and cite possible lessons which could be learnt from the study.

Research Design and Methodology

The purposive sampling technique was adopted to identify participants who could provide the most appropriate information that could achieve the desired objectives of the study. The population for the study consisted of trainers and trainees in the Theology and Religious Studies programmes at Zimbabwean Universities. The participants were selected from the four universities for their proximity to the researcher and also for offering degree programmes in Religious Studies. Data was collected through narratives, in-depth interviews with four religious and theology lecturers [trainers] and five trainees from the selected universities to examine their experiences in mainstreaming disability issues in religious and theological studies in order to come up with disability programmes which are responsive to Southern Africa's development needs. The study followed the standard procedures of qualitative research, such as, seeking participants' consent to take part in the study without disclosing their names and as assurance that the collected data was only meant for research purposes and was going to be kept confidential.

Data was collected using individual in-depth interviews, document analysis of programmes offered by selected universities while personal observations were an on-going activity. The qualitative approach was used to gain insights as to how mainstreaming disability in the existing programmes as a response to shifts in trends and events could promote development initiatives. Another reason is that it allowed explicit and implicit understanding of the phenomenon under study from its past and

present, show possibilities for the future and open ground for further investigations. Considering the intrusive nature of ethnography and anthropology in the lives of people with disability, there was good reason for the use of the ethnography design for this qualitative study. Ethnography involves observations, descriptions, depiction, language issues and applied meanings and representation of the lived experiences.¹⁷ This study took into account all this; thus, it was most appropriate for this study because it enabled the trainers and their trainees to give meanings to their own actions in mainstreaming disability. The design was selected for its freedom from preemptive research design and also as most responsive to the context and the study participants.

The collected data was transcribed and analyzed as interviews proceeded and that was advantageous to the study because it enabled adjustments to interview questions based on the individual in-depth interview responses. Furthermore, it allowed investigating new aspects based on previously carried interviews. The collected data was qualitatively analyzed. Thus, participants' experiences were coded as interview sessions took place. For verification purposes, the responses were read and revised several times to extract emerging patterns and meanings given to the phenomenon under study. Corresponding emerging themes were collapsed into more meaningful umbrella themes which were further compared and contrasted. The discussion attempted to address the research questions for this study by comparing and contrasting participants' insights on the phenomenon under study and supported any matters that arose with related literature where possible.

¹⁷ T. May (ed), *Qualitative Research in Action*, Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2002. J.W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Method Approaches*, Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2003.

Findings and Discussions

The majority of the lecturers who took part in this study applauded ATISCA for its prompt response and commitment to reinforce EDAN disability mainstreaming objectives by producing *The Disability in Africa Resource Book* which trainers could utilize to develop a curriculum for all.¹⁸ The same participants appraised the action as a noble foundation for future disability mainstreaming curriculum developments. Despite the mixed sentiments, debates and controversies based on some of the Old Testament texts and biblical terms, such as crippled, deaf, or damp. Such terms became derogatory and devaluing to people with disability, when used as labels or for name-calling. When Jesus used such terms, he did not mean to devalue any of them but revealed that all people were created in the image of God. They therefore needed to be given equal love and attention just as Jesus Christ practiced that by healing them and showing them love and asking them to rejoin their families or societies. Such actions were in essence inclusive practices. In other words, disability mainstreaming could be likened to the ways and means Jesus used to include PWDs, who came into contact with him.

The findings encourage authorities, trainers and trainees to promote the implementation of disability mainstreaming as an agent of development for all people with and without disability. Most participants described it as the proper route opening doors to inclusive practices. In support, Cobley argues that PWDs have the same rights as their peers without disability, as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and as such should benefit from development activities on an equal basis with everyone else¹⁹. Disability

¹⁸ S. Kabue, J. Amanze and C. Landman (eds), *Disability in Africa: Resource Book for Theology and Religious Studies*, Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2016.

¹⁹ D. Cobley, "Disability and Development: Professional Development Reading Pack, *Applied Knowledge Services*, 2013, www.gsdr.org [7.9.2017].

mainstreaming must reinforce the referencing of people by their names rather than by their impairments and also articulate their academic strengths and weaknesses for purposes of informed placement with a view to promote development initiatives for all.

This is equally supported by the biblical text in 2 Samuel 9. When David became King, he visited the house of Saul, who on several occasions had attempted to kill him. David's visit was out of love and to show kindness to others regardless of their physical outlook or financial or property status, such as Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul and Jonathan's son. David did not only have dinner with Mephibosheth but he even gave him back all the land he had lost. Based on the Old Testament's perspective, David could be described as someone who did something which was *unprecedented* during that period. This was expressed by the majority of trainees undertaking Religious Studies programmes from the selected universities which took part in this study. These participants argued that it is unprecedented and out of practice that faculties and departments of Theology and Religious Studies at university level take so long to implement disability mainstreaming, yet Christians are expected to base all they do on love and should discourage discrimination by race, colour, status and disability. In further support, some trainees proposed that disability mainstreaming should discourage stereotypes where one is expected to have a complete physical structure rather than spiritual strength as a relevant virtue. The study proposed that, if disability mainstreaming is implemented by all, then theology and religious training programmes are likely to enhance various ecumenical platforms to give the expected support.

Despite previously held perspectives towards PWDs that they are cursed, that their disability is a punishment and that they deserve death, this study discourages its readers from holding such views. Thus, the majority of the participants who took part in this study encouraged that individuals

should use their social, emotional, spiritual, physical and cognitive intelligence to leave the past aside and shift to the present where advocacy and preaching is on mainstreaming disability in every sector of life, including in Theology and Religious Studies training institutions which are the focus of this study. Furthermore, the majority of trainees felt that peers with a disability mainstreaming background were more likely to present texts such as Matthew 15:29-31 which says, “bring the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute” so that they get healed than those without disability mainstreaming education. Participants further proposed that trainees or trainers who have gone through a disability mainstreaming programme were likely to apply their social, emotional, physical, cognitive and spiritual intelligence towards disability issues and related biblical texts. Participants proposed that such measures are likely to reduce upsurges of stigma and discrimination which many ignorant people use to interpret some of the Old Testament texts on disability. Thus, most participants regarded this study as useful in reinforcing disability mainstreaming and development initiatives. The majority of trainees and trainers who took part in this study felt that ATISCA could have piloted the resource book in different institutions in the Southern African Region and used the findings to further improve disability mainstreaming using views obtained from a wide spectrum. However, the minority of participants were against this view, they felt that any of the institutions that had started implementing disability mainstreaming should periodically give feedback to ATISCA so that the resource book continues to be improved until such consensus is reached by its set periods which could be every 2 years, 5 years and more. This is supported by these excerpts:

Use report evaluations and feedback from implementers to keep on improving the curriculum until satisfied.

While the minority proposed:

Implement, consult and share ideas, continue to consult and mobilize internal and external support.

Generally, the participants appreciated ATISCA's commitment and proposed that if there were other such organizations in disability mainstreaming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation was going to be pragmatic and expedient. In other words, this is meant to encourage other capable organizations to join ATISCA in this noble venture because they felt that it was likely to continue to raise consciousness levels of people from a wider spectrum and at the same time continue to increase appreciation of disability mainstreaming in theological training programmes. As reflected by document analysis of programmes, all the universities selected for this study had for unknown reasons not started implementing disability mainstreaming though they were aware of EDAN's call (2006) to do so. The study participants proposed that such actions were likely to produce trainers and trainees oriented in development for all people where nobody is left out, thus, according to participants, everybody in such a country is likely to cherish and work towards achieving all the development-oriented goals and objectives related to a theology of disability. In support, Coetzee posits that development is a formal social change which leads to progress; a process of enlarging people's choices in acquiring knowledge and having access to resources for a decent standard of living and a condition of moving from worse to better living conditions.²⁰ According to the majority of trainees who took part in this study, disability mainstreaming is therefore in essence inclusive practice and a pillar to development initiatives. The majority of trainees felt that theological institutions should initiate disability mainstreaming as a development initiative for all. However, the same participants further stressed that engaging PWDs themselves in continual analysis is likely going to make vast differences to disability mainstreaming and further improve the curricula. Participants agreed that Theology and Religious

²⁰ J.K. Coetzee, "Modernization Theory: A Model for Progress," in J.K. Coetzee and J.F. Graaf, *What is Sustainability?* 2001, www.globallearnlondon.org [28.9.2017].

Studies curricula should embrace disability to promote development in Africa and also to reinforce disability engendering in education in order to produce trainers and trainees oriented in the development for all philosophy. Most participants proposed that for the African countries to reinforce disability mainstreaming, relevant authorities needed to involve churches when celebrating the World Disability Day every 3rd of December by encouraging them to invite key speakers to their churches to address congregants on disability mainstreaming. It was further hoped that this would prepare for its permeation into all sectors and also to influence talks about disability matters with one voice as a development for all initiative.

Regarding the ATISCA curriculum, some trainers who participated in this study expressed fears to just implement the curriculum without piloting it, but when probed further as to whether they had started the feasibility study they just suggested that the process was under plan but without specific deadlines. In other words, all institutions that have not yet mainstreamed disability in their Theology and Religious Studies programmes are being encouraged by this study to consider it as a matter of mandate with potential in promoting inclusive practices and meeting the unreached and giving voice to the silence in sustainable development.

Mainstreaming disability in theology programmes is likely to offer pragmatic ways of ensuring educational practices that are nondiscriminatory and inclusive.²¹ Such advances are likely to prompt concerned universities to address shortcomings of their lecturers in the theology of disability. This is further hoped to produce trainees and trainers who are proficient in a theology of disability that is likely to enhance inclusive practice and also provide practical guidelines. Disability mainstreaming is hoped to enable lecturers to interact meaningfully with both trainees and PWDs

²¹ K. Wynn, "Embracing Disability in Teaching Religion," *American Academy of Religion (AAR)*, 20(3), 2005.

themselves. This is likely to create closer relationships between people with and without disabilities and create faculties and departments sensitive to disability mainstreaming as a development initiative for all. Wynn stresses that this is likely to increase the recognition of disability studies as a sub-discipline within Religious Studies deserving distinct treatment as a legitimate matter.²²

Most participants felt that all faculties, departments and centres should promptly adopt disability mainstreaming and also make sure that it is considered as a core course with a view to reduce the challenges faced in a theology of disability. The same participants stressed that its implementation was likely to reduce the stereotypes and move from deficiencies to the person first theory where everyone is known by name and not by his or her impairment. The participants further hoped that it would reduce the myriad of biases and judgments embedded in day-to-day common metaphors on disability, such as, fell on deaf ears; blind spot; or morally crippled. These are likely to provoke negative attitudes towards mainstreaming disability and undermine its implementation. Trainers with disability mainstreaming education are likely to discourage the use of such metaphors with cognitive, emotional and social intelligence. This study serves to caution theological training centres to in-service their lecturers so that they teach disability mainstreaming without a mixture of perspectives towards PWDs. They are also likely to discourage the belief that it is the religious texts which deeply implicated and evoked the prevailing insensitivity towards PWDs due to the moral deficiency in existing theology programmes, which disability mainstreaming wishes to reduce.

Religious texts are deeply implicated on inscribing bodies that are infirm, ill, weak and physically impaired with meanings that signify ignorance, and evil and are sin related or allude to moral deficiency and lack of faith;

²² Ibid.

and that is said to have evoked the prevailing debates and controversies on the adoption of the disability mainstreaming curriculum as already affirmed by most authors in the ATISCA Resource Book and equally by most participants in this study.²³ On the other hand, the standing view has the potential of eroding the socio-economic status of countries where disability mainstreaming is absent across sectors. Thus, this study is important because it aims to reinforce disability mainstreaming from a development concern and view. In order to successfully mainstream disability the majority of trainees and trainers who took part in this study proposed that both mentors/lecturers and training centres needed to be flexible and to accept changes not for the sake of it but for the socio-economic development of Southern Africa while at the same time changing the lives of anyone they rub shoulders with. The participants encouraged related institutions to be guided by the theology of reconciliation conceptual framework and the selected principles such as, mutual acknowledgement of past ways, re-building positive relationships and emphasis on moral values as a core concern. These selected principles shall guide this study in allying anticipated disability mainstreaming fears and challenges. The study also encourages religious institutions or centres which have successfully implemented disability mainstreaming to share their experiences in order to further improve the proposed curriculum and share knowledge on best improvement practices. Most participants felt that lecturers from religious and theological studies and disability studies needed to engage frequently, share information and co-author to give new insights and understandings, and also as a way of coming up with possible recent literature in the theology of disability. This is likely to help shift the attention of universities towards disability mainstreaming as a development initiative.

²³ Ibid.

The major challenge cited by most theology and religious studies trainees was that the absence of disability mainstreaming was likely to cause a hermeneutical approach to disability where some biblical texts and disability discourses could be deciphered in plain linguistic meaning and historical context, making the matter to be out of touch with current realities of disability expectations. Lack of disability mainstreaming was likely to produce theology and religion trainees with obsolete information which is likely not to find place in modern development practices. The UNCRPD (2006) Article 32 stresses that all sectors should feel obliged to mainstream disability to ensure contribution to development by everyone.

Another common challenge was that most Bible schools and theological institutions did not have facilities for PWDs and most of their facilities/departments were not accommodative to PWDs and their needs. On the other hand, lack of skill in Sign Language and also lack of skill in transcribing Braille was proposed to cause communication misunderstanding with people who are deaf and those with visual impairment. In agreement the majority of trainers [lecturers] felt that:

Delaying to mainstream disability does mean that we are against the idea but the system should equip us first with various skills such as Sign Language, disability recommended discourse and Braille so that we equally skill our trainees with complete knowledge. Or the system should provide a trained special education specialist whom we should work with as a focal person..

In support, the majority of the trainees stressed the need to produce a glossary of old discourse versus the appreciated discourse and related meanings. All participants felt that teaching learners in their language was likely to bring understanding and build strong relationships which are likely to increase disability mainstreaming in different sectors. Thus,

Cobley and Coetzee re-affirm that language plays a major role in development at both local and global scale.²⁴ The same authors further affirm that the local languages of the people should be used in the pursuit of the development process. In other words, the findings emphasize the adage that “people are people with other people,” thus a society without disability mainstreaming education is likely to be incomplete without people with disability, even in theology and religious studies programmes. Thus, without each other, images are likely to remain incomplete because nobody possesses all talents that any one individual with disability possesses. As such, trainee theologians who would have completed disability mainstreaming courses are likely to produce mainstreamed disability voices which encapsulate valuable mainstream knowledge and further can uplift development in Southern Africa. The study, therefore, cautions us all to reinforce disability mainstreaming in theology and religious studies and other programmes in order to further reinforce development initiatives for all.

Mechanisms to be Put in Place

The findings stressed that disability mainstreaming could be enhanced through learning from each other as pointed out by the majority of religious and theology trainers and trainees who took part in this study. The participants consensually proposed that theology and religious studies could learn from each other through using model institutions where disability mainstreaming has been successfully put in place and managed to produce ambassadors who can spread the same news and ideas from

²⁴ D. Cobley, "Disability and Development: Professional Development Reading Pack, *Applied Knowledge Services*, 2013, www.gsdr.org [7.9.2017]; J.K. Coetzee, "Modernization Theory: A Model for Progress," in J.K. Coetzee and J.F. Graaf, *What is Sustainability?* Humanities Education Centre, 2001, www.globallearnlondon.org [28.9.2017].

an informed view. It therefore implies that theology and religious training institutions need to continue to create sharing platforms with other institutions, churches and people with disabilities or their representatives. Such actions are likely to keep on giving feedback on change for development. Collaborative research was cited as a tool which could also help sharpen the theologians' understanding of disability mainstreaming. The findings revealed that successful implementation of disability mainstreaming can help improve the socio-economic status of most African countries without compromising the abilities and participation of current PWDs and any future generations. The study calls on social justice pursuit to ensure well-being for all. Disability mainstreaming in theology and religious studies has been a neglected area thus, this study stresses the need to implement disability mainstreaming as a means to increase development initiatives for all.

The findings noted that challenges in disability mainstreaming seem to emanate from the traditional lens which see disability as an abnormality and a condition requiring medical attention. Some trainers who took part in the study proposed that changing people's attitudes towards disability probably requires more time without forcing it but taking a less fast pace until issues requiring clarity are cleared. However, they proposed that this could be enhanced by developing policies that mandate all theological training institutions to mainstream disability. They further claimed that some ideas are usually forced without checking the implementers' point of views or consulting widely enough in order to get prior experiences and best practices in streamlining disability issues into systems' syllabi as a cross-cutting issue. The study further proposed that best practices could only be obtained through involving and consulting people with disabilities themselves. In other words, the study encourages adoption of the "nothing without us philosophy" in matters of theological

education, curriculum infusion, in-service courses, adaptation and building of accessible infrastructures at theology and religious training centres as a way of enhancing disability mainstreaming.

As disability mainstreaming ambassadors, the study encouraged all who have completed the programme to utilize gatherings such as meetings and church services to enhance disability mainstreaming through knowledge sharing, making use of models and encouraging all people to celebrate World Disability Day every 3rd December. All participants suggested that there was need to underscore and facilitate how mainstreaming disability could help increase the socio-economic development of countries in Southern Africa, including sparing Zimbabwe.

Eiesland stresses that challenges for those studying religion and theology have been to develop conceptual frameworks, intellectual practices and pedagogical awareness which investigate disability's presence rather than perpetuate the absent presence of disability within our work.²⁵ The resurrection story in Luke (24:36-39), where Jesus appears to his followers and reveals his injured hands and feet, embodies disability in his resurrected body and further indicates that disability is not a flawed humanity but a full humanity and this is compatible with experiences of disability.²⁶ The theology of disability aims to remove social barriers and restore PWDs to their communities through biblical texts on healing for the removal of social barriers.²⁷ For example, the healing of the blind man in John 9 or the man with leprosy who asks Jesus to cleanse him in Mark 1:40-45, are good examples of how Jesus restored the vulnerable and disadvantaged people to their communities. Another text of controversy is Mark 2:1-12, where Jesus healed the paralytic and forgave him

²⁵ Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN), 2006.

²⁶ N.L. Eiesland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994.

²⁷ Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN), 2006.

and that affirmed the removal of stigma generally imposed on PWDs by the culture of disability and interpretation of Biblical texts. EDAN noted similar sentiments and thus continues to argue that theology and religious study programmes needed to mainstream disability in their programmes in order to achieve development initiatives from a social justice framework, a virtue guiding most religious work.²⁸ While the study is aware of the existing discrepancy in mainstreaming disability in most religious and theological training programmes, it suggests that its implementation is necessary if development initiatives are to be achieved in Southern Africa, including Zimbabwe.

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

- 1) All organizations and institutions currently supporting disability mainstreaming should remain committed until it is achieved and the fruits of its implementation are obtained.
- 2) There is need for ATISCA to workshop disability mainstreaming to all institutions in the Southern Region who are running Theology and Religious Studies programmes so as to increase social justice in the region.
- 3) That skilled theologians act as ambassadors of disability mainstreaming to all people they come across and even take yearly chances at services to preach this news as a way of celebrating the Disability World Day on 3rd December with people living with disabilities.
- 4) That ATISCA and any other interested organizations need to carry out further disability mainstreaming advocacy until all institutions offering Theology and Religious Study programmes implement it to address social injustice and increase development initiatives.
- 5) There is need for theology and disability lecturers to collaborate in the implementation of disability mainstreaming through discussions,

²⁸ Ibid.

workshops and co-authoring research papers on disability mainstreaming.

Conclusion

People with disabilities constitute 15 to 20% of the world population and that is a large enough number to cause alarm. A follow up to this was made by legal frameworks such as the CRPD to address key matters in the field of disability. However, Creamer reminds us to take cautions by suggesting that disability represents a bona fide minority group, thus should be consciously engaged especially in diversified studies such as Theology and Religious Studies.²⁹ People teaching and pursuing religious studies needed to be prepared to work with PWDs in their lectures and congregations.³⁰ To reinforce this EDAN and other supportive organizations collaborated and proposed that social justice and any other development initiatives could only be achieved where disability mainstreaming is implemented. This study applauds ATISCA for spearheading disability mainstreaming in Southern Africa and also for producing a resource book that theologians can consult. Though the resource book may not be the Bible to disability mainstreaming, it serves to set a foundation which is hoped to attain more feedback through more consultations and conferences.

Findings in this study reflect that it is time that all universities and colleges offering Religious and Theology Studies reconciled their past and present with a view to recognize disability throughout their courses

²⁹ D.B. Creamer, *Disability and Christian Theology: Embodied Limits and Constructive Possibilities*, Oxford: Oxford Scholarship, 2008; United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006, www.un.org/.../disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities [22.9.2017].

³⁰ Ibid.

.In support, Creamer posits that as an asterisk or special topic, disability is relevant throughout the curriculum even in places where it has been previously invisible or unnoticed, thus should be considered as a cross-cutting issue.³¹ Why, because disability is found everywhere and does not have boundaries, thus exists in all our day-to-day interactions, lectures, lessons and learning. The absence of mainstreaming disability in everything we do makes us miss our roles as lecturers, teachers and preachers and it is likely to negatively impact on our development initiatives. Disability mainstreaming implementation is likely to produce theology trainers possessing the most needed social, emotional, cognitive and physical intelligence which could be passed from one generation to another with a view to keep on improving the development initiatives in the Southern Region, not sparing its global impact. In essence, such development is likely to reduce stereotyped discrimination tendencies towards PWDs and promote best practices in inclusion which may be equated to Jesus Christ's motives of healing the sick and the disabled and showing everyone love as demonstrated in 2 Samuel 9 by David to Mephibosheth. This also reinforces the text that every human being was created in God's image. That further affirms that any references to the field of disability should always follow the *person first theory* to reinforce equity and equality as development initiatives are for all. The study encourages all universities offering Theology and Religious Studies to mainstream disability in order to reduce social injustice and promote an increase in development initiatives through re-building relationships to give hope, harmony and human-ness and increase collaboration between people with and without disabilities.

³¹ Ibid.

Chapter 10

Pentecostal Churches' Involvement in Addressing Gender Inequalities, a Move Towards Attaining Sustainable Development Goal 5 in ZAOGA Forward in Faith (FIF) Church

Fungai Chirongoma

Introduction

In the past years, religions have become active in addressing problems in societies. Religions have become key actors in the health and education sectors, and in the economy of Africa. It is against this background that the impact of religion in the public sphere should not be overlooked. Statistics indicate that 50% of sub-Saharan social services are provided by faith-based organizations.¹ Of interest to note is how religion has been a voice for gender equality, while numerous publications present religion as a toxic power and a major cause of gender inequality and oppression.² Although religion, through misinterpretation of texts and traditions, has

¹ B. Bompani, "Religion and Faith Based Organizations in Africa: the Forgotten Actors," 2011, www.e-ir.info/2011/09/27/religion-and-faith-based-organisations-in-africa-the-forgotten-actors [14.10.2016].

² U. Rwafa, "Culture and Religion as Sources of Gender Inequality: Rethinking Challenges Women Face in Contemporary Africa," *Journal of Literary Studies*, 32(1), 2016.

been used to subjugate women, it must be appreciated that religion is not always bad news to women.

It is the mandate of this chapter to articulate how religion has proliferated in the public sphere as a voice and space for gender equality. Such involvement, therefore, makes religions key partners in the sustainable development agenda, particularly in achieving the sustainable development goal five (SDG5) which calls for the empowerment of women and gender equality. To explain religious involvement in advocating for gender justice, the chapter uses the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa Forward in Faith (ZAOGA FIF) church, indicating how its involvement in the call for gender equality influences development.

Beyond Proselytizing: Religion in the Public Sphere

Although the primary goal of religion has been and continues to be spirituality, religions' activities have crossed to the secular world. Religions play a major role in the public space of modern societies. Religions' entering into the public arena is not primarily to defend its traditions but to get involved and participate in struggles faced by the society. Analyzing the role that was played by religion in the 1980s in the West, Casanova indicates that religions are likely to continue playing important public roles in the ongoing construction of the modern world.³ Casanova's prediction on the continued influence of religion in the public sphere is convincing, given how religion has continued to be influential side by side with modernity and technology.

³ J. Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994, p. 5.

Religion is increasingly becoming visible in the public space.⁴ The role played by religion in public life can be drawn from the link between religion and the secular. Although secularization theories lobbied for the privatization of religion, religion continues to be visible, challenging the legitimacy and autonomy of secular spheres, the state, and the economy.⁵ Religion informs politics.⁶ Religion is also visible in education,⁷ health⁸ and the economy.⁹

Religions' visibility in the secular sphere has been through social movements, religious institutions, and organizations. In sub-Saharan Africa, religions have gained significance in the public sphere through faith-based organizations (FBOs). FBOs derive inspiration and guidance for their activities from the teachings and principles of faith.¹⁰ FBOs are formal organizations engaged in development work, inspired by faith and

⁴ M. Clarke, *Understanding the Nexus between Religion and Development*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013.

⁵ J. Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

⁶ M. Clarke, *Understanding the Nexus between Religion and Development*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013.

⁷ B. Bompani, "Religion and Faith Based Organizations in Africa: The Forgotten Actors," 2011, www.e-ir.info/2011/09/27/religion-and-faith-based-organisations-in-africa-the-forgotten-actors [14.10.2016].

⁸ M.J. DeHaven et al, "Health Programs in Faith Based Organizations: are they Effective?" *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 94(6), 2004.

⁹ A.C. Vidal, 'Community Development' prepared by the Urban Institute prepared for US Dep't of Housing and Community Development Office of Policy Development and Research, Report August 2001.

¹⁰ E. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, "Introduction: Faith-based Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2011.

familiar with the language of secular development.¹¹ Moreover, Clarke and Jennings define an FBO as ‘any organization that derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of the faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within a faith.’¹² It is through these organizations that one can clearly see the link between religion and development. The next section presents the nexus between religion and development.

Religion and Development

Until recently, religion has been largely ignored in development research.¹³ Most scholars have neglected the role of religion in development issues,¹⁴ through the assumption that religion will withdraw as societies modernize,¹⁵ and it will eventually disappear.¹⁶ Religion and development were regarded as separate concerns because of the notion

¹¹ B. Bompani, "Local Religious Organizations Performing Development: Refugees in the Central Methodist Mission in Johannesburg," *Journal of International Development*, 27(2), 2015.

¹² G. Clarke and M. Jennings, "Introduction," in G. Clarke and M. Jennings (eds), *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p. 6.

¹³ S. Deneulin, and C. Rakodi, "Revisiting Religion: Development Studies Thirty Years on," *World Development*, 39(1), 2011.

¹⁴ K. Fretheim, *Rights and Riches: Exploring the Moral Discourse of Norwegian Development Aid*, Bern: Peter Lang, 2008.

¹⁵ E. Tomalin, *Gender, Faith and Development*, Rugby: Practical Action Publishing, 2011.

¹⁶ J. Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994; S. Deneulin and C. Rakodi, "Revisiting Religion: Development Studies Thirty Years On," *World Development*, 39(1), 2011; M. Clarke, *Understanding the Nexus between Religion and Development*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013.

that development is closely tied to secularization and modernization, conditions from which religion has been excluded over time.¹⁷ Religions were generally regarded as concerned with spirituality, a condition that development practitioners saw as irrelevant in attaining development goals. However, states, governments, and development agencies have realized the need to take religions seriously in issues of development. Although it is without merit to say that religion is the answer to development, the role that religion plays in development should not be overlooked.¹⁸ The significance of religion to development lies in the fact it is the primary source for values and morality for the majority.¹⁹ In the same vein, Sidibe indicates that religion constitutes an integral and inextricable feature of human development, and to assume that religion can be separated from development is to fundamentally misunderstand what it means to be human.”²⁰

There is a consensus between the World Bank and other secular development agencies that cooperation with religious-based organizations contributes to the achievement of developmental goals.²¹ It is the power that religion yields in the lives of individuals that makes it an integral element of development, thus appropriating religion as a resource to development makes religious organizations, religious communities and religious leaders vital agents in development activities. Given that this

¹⁷ J. Haynes, *Religion and Development: Conflict or Cooperation*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 2.

¹⁸ M. Clarke, *Understanding the Nexus Between Religion and Development*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013.

¹⁹ S. Deneulin and C. Rakodi, "Revisiting Religion: Development Studies Thirty Years On," *World Development*, 39(1), 2011.

²⁰ M. Sidibe, "Religion and Sustainable Development," *The Review of Faith and International Affairs*, 14.3, 2016, pp. 1-4

²¹ J. Haynes, *Religion and Development: Conflict or Cooperation*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 12.

research in on Christianity in Zimbabwe, it is crucial to narrow down to focus on development and the church in Zimbabwe.

The Church and Development in Zimbabwe

There are different strands of Christianity in Zimbabwe. These include mainline churches, Pentecostals, and African Initiated Churches (AICs). Regardless of similarities and particularities, these churches have been involved in development issues. A clear understanding of Christianity's involvement in development can be understood in light of Freitheim's development theology. For Freitheim, development theology is a theology that reflects on the meaning and implications of the Christian faith with regards to the improvement of living conditions for people living in poverty.²² Freitheim's understanding of development theology narrows down to focus on the fight against poverty as the central aim of development. In this study, the theology of development is used to refer to religious involvement in any developmental issue including, but not limited to, education, economy, health, environment, and politics as well as gender equality.

Although primarily known for humanitarian aid programmes, churches have been key in the health, educational and economic sectors of Zimbabwe. Such can be appreciated from several mission schools and hospitals in Zimbabwe. Mission schools have a long history in Zimbabwe dating back to the colonial era.²³ Some of the schools are; Gokomere, Waddilove, Nhowe, Mt Selinda, Pakame and Daramombe. These church-owned

²² K. Freitheim, "Development, Ethics and Theology: Interdisciplinary Connections and Challenges," *Journal of Global Ethics* 7, no. 3, 2011, pp. 303-313.

²³ L.M. Nyagura and A.R. Riddell, *Primary School Achievement in English and Mathematics in Zimbabwe: A Multilevel Analysis*, (vol. 1208). World Bank Publications, 1993; E. Shizha and M.T. Kariwo, *Education and Development in*

schools form the majority of boarding schools in Zimbabwe. Mission schools still retain a strong religious affiliation.²⁴ Apart from schools, there are a number of church-owned hospitals in Zimbabwe, as missionaries made a significant contribution in providing health care.²⁵ These hospitals include Mt Selinda, Morgenster, Nyadiri, Waddilove, and Kwenda Mission hospitals.²⁶ It is from these church-owned institutions that the involvement of religion in the health and educational sectors of Zimbabwe can be appreciated.

Apart from health and education, the church has been key in humanitarian aid programmes. In 2002, Zimbabwe was faced with a serious drought and key relief aid that people received came from church-owned organizations. Christian Care is one of the aid organizations that implemented the World Food Programme activities in Zimbabwe.²⁷ The organization provided people with basic commodities such as flour, cooking oil and beans. However, there might have been hidden agendas, as Marshall and van Saanen argue for the need to analyze every FBO critically, carefully and contextually in a bid to understand its agenda in development.²⁸ Deducing from the aid they provided in the crisis period, one can conclude how churches can be proactive to address problems at hand.

Zimbabwe: A Social, Political and Economic Analysis, Boston: Sense Publishers, 2015.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ A.S. Mlambo, *A History of Zimbabwe*, Cambridge University Press, 2014.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ T. Murithi and A. Mawadza (eds), *Zimbabwe in Transition: A View from within*, Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2011.

²⁸ K. Marshall and M. van Saanen, *Development and Faith: Where Mind and Soul Work Together*, Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2007.

It is important to note that apart from well-known Christian based organizations, community churches are also key in providing aid and relief in times of need. In 2014 Zimbabwe faced a national disaster, the 'Tokwe-Mukosi disaster'. The disaster was a flooding that led to the collapse of the Tokwe-Mukosi dam which rendered over 1500 people homeless. Churches in Zimbabwe were heavily involved in helping the victims. The United Methodist Church donated US\$ 72,142 worth of goods for the relief of the Tokwe-Mukosi flood victims.²⁹ Religious leaders from various denominations called for believers to assist the Tokwe-Mukosi victims.

African Initiated Churches (AICs) are also visible in development issues in Zimbabwe. AICs' involvement in the public sphere has mainly been in the economic sector. H. Turner in his 1980 study on AICs and development indicated that AICs moved from being a closed, unitary, sacral society into churches in an open, plural, and secular society.³⁰ Many AIC women are Christian entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe. Members from these churches are equipped with technical skills such as carpentry, basketry, metalworking, building and leatherworking.³¹ Women and children are mostly involved in the trade of these homemade artefacts.³² While AICs face the charge of oppressing women, the contributions of these churches

²⁹ <http://umczea.org/church-responses-to-tokwe-mukosi-disaster-2>.

³⁰ H. Turner, "African Independent Churches and Economic Development," *World Development*, 7.8, 1980, pp. 527-533.

³¹ L. Mabhunú, "Revolting against the Biblical and Traditional Stereotypes of Women? Women Prophets," in L. Togarasei and E. Chitando (eds), in *Faith in the City: The Role and Place of Religion in Harare*, Uppsala: Swedish Science Press, 2010.

³² T.P. Mapuranga, "Surviving the Urban Jungle: AICs and Women's Socio-Economic Coping Strategies in Harare (2000-2010)," in E. Chitando, M.R. Gunda and J. K  gler (eds), *Multiplying in the Spirit: African Initiated Churches in Zimbabwe*, vol. 15, Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2014.

to the economy of Zimbabwe through their vocational and entrepreneurship skills in a society faced with grave unemployment should not be overlooked. Similarly, Pentecostal churches have also become active in development issues. Although there are a number of Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe, this study draws its examples from ZAOGA FIF, one of the biggest independent Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe. ZAOGA FIF was founded by Ezekiel Handinawangu Guti.³³ Maxwell, Biri and Musoni have researched extensively on ZAOGA FIF. These scholars lay a foundation for studies on ZAOGA FIF. Maxwell gives the history of ZAOGA FIF,³⁴ Musoni elaborates on ZAOGA's commitment to development.³⁵ Musoni notes how Pentecostal churches are bringing about development through the building of schools. ZAOGA FIF runs a University known as Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University (ZEGU).³⁶ ZAOGA FIF's University received the best Private University in Zimbabwe Award.³⁷ Apart from the University, ZAOGA has several primary and secondary schools.³⁸ These include Grange Primary School,

³³ K. Biri, "Proverbs 31 Woman: Pentecostalism and Disempowering Femininities and Oppressive Masculinities in Zimbabwe: A Critique," in J. Hunter and J. Kugler (eds), *The Bible and Violence in Africa*, Papers presented at the BiAS meeting 2014 in Windhoek (Namibia), with some additional contributions, Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2016.

³⁴ D. Maxwell, *African Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecostalism and the Rise of a Zimbabwean Transnational Religious Movement*, Melton, Woodbridge: James Currey, 2006.

³⁵ P. Musoni, "African Pentecostalism and Sustainable Development: A Study on The Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa, Forward in Faith Church," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2(10), 2013.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Anonymous, ZAOGA FIF, Telephone Int. 31 July 2017.

³⁸ K. Biri, "Proverbs 31 Woman: Pentecostalism and Disempowering Femininities and Oppressive Masculinities in Zimbabwe: A Critique," in *The Bible and Violence in Africa*. Papers presented at the BiAS meeting 2014 in Windhoek

Ezekiel Guti Community College, Forward in Faith College (formerly Christ for Zimbabwe) and Denda Primary School. ZAOGA is also contributing to the health sector in Zimbabwe. The church owns a hospital located in the suburb of Waterfalls in Harare (Mbuya Dorcas Hospital). The establishment of this medical institution becomes a window to evaluate the extent to which Pentecostal churches continue to be crucial in the critical area of health and well-being of Zimbabweans.³⁹

ZAOGA FIF is contributing to the economic sector through entrepreneurship skills. Buying and selling is the order of the day in ZAOGA FIF. The church encourages entrepreneurship through working of 'Talents,' commonly known as *Matarenda*. Talents teach people to be industrious, accountable and co-operative.⁴⁰ Talents are an ideology in ZAOGA which teaches believers entrepreneurship skills to get money for church projects. Although the primary purpose for the establishment of Talents was for church projects, it must be noted that the skills gained by believers are also used for self-sustenance. Believers thus understand talents as an ideology of self-enhancement. It is against this background that one can appreciate how ZAOGA FIF is contributing to the economic development of Zimbabwe. Musoni notes that ZAOGA FIF's stance on *matarenda* resonates with the government's policy on national development of Zimbabwe.⁴¹ Entrepreneurship is a key aspect in economic development and it continues to be ZAOGA FIF's aim to promote such skills, for instance, the mission of its University (ZEGU) places emphasis

(Namibia), with some additional contributions, J. Hunter and J. Kugler (eds), Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, vol. 20, 2016.

³⁹ P. Musoni, "African Pentecostalism and Sustainable Development: A Study on the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa, Forward in Faith Church," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2(10), 2013.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

on entrepreneurship. ZEGU's mission is 'developing a total person and promoting entrepreneurship.'⁴²

From the above it is clear that churches are contributing immensely in the field of development through health, education, and entrepreneurship. A lot has been recorded with regards to how churches have been active in health, education and economic development. However, very few studies consider how understanding gender issues from a religious perspective can contribute to development. Religion and development studies have been largely gender blind.

Religion, Gender, and Development

Religion has been ignored in the gender and development discourse. What religion can contribute to gender equality and its influence on development has received little attention. It is only recently that scholars of gender and development realized the need to take religion seriously, so there is little scholarship that considers the interaction between religion, gender, and development.⁴³ Although often deeply patriarchal and androcentric, religion is not always bad news to women.⁴⁴ If appropriated well, religions contain resources within them that are vital in addressing gender inequality. Kenschaft and others note how people can draw on religion to challenge inequality.⁴⁵ Be that as it may, some scholars

⁴² www.zegu.ac.zw [6.7.2017].

⁴³ E. Tomalin, *Gender, Faith and Development*, Practical Action Publishing: Rugby, 2011.

⁴⁴ T.P. Mapuranga, "Surviving the Urban Jungle: AICs and Women's Socio-Economic Coping Strategies in Harare (2000-2010)," in E. Chitando, M.R. Gunda and J. Kügler (eds), *Multiplying in the Spirit: African Initiated Churches in Zimbabwe*, Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, vol. 15, 2014.

⁴⁵ L. Kenschaft et al, *Gender Inequality in our Changing World: A Comparative Approach*, London and New York: Routledge, 2015.

strongly believe that nothing positive can be drawn out of religion to address gender inequalities. For Rwafa, religion and culture remain sources of gender inequality and oppression of women in Africa.⁴⁶ Mwaura indicates how churches in Africa have relegated women to the pew, so that women are absent from power structures of the churches.⁴⁷ However, this chapter argues that religion has been misused to undermine women's capabilities. The church, for instance, misinterprets texts to justify women's subjugation. It is such subjugation that limits women to participate in community development. To address gender inequalities which affect community development, it is crucial to turn to religion as it contains resources within it that can be used to liberate women. There is need to deconstruct gender stereotypes created by religion and culture which hinder women to fully participate in the development of Africa.

It must be noted that this chapter's aim is not to discard laws, legislations, quota systems, and affirmative action policies that have been put in place to emancipate women. The chapter acknowledges the role of religion in emancipating women. Statistics reveal that gender inequalities and violence against women persist despite all the laws that have been implemented. It appears laws and policies remain more theoretical than practical. Given this background, one can propose to turn to religious resources in addressing gender inequalities. It is the resources within religious traditions that make religions key partners in the sustainable development agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as 'Transforming our World. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' is a set of 17 goals. Some of these goals include end of

⁴⁶ U. Rwafa, "Culture and Religion as Sources of Gender Inequality: Rethinking Challenges Women Face in Contemporary Africa," *Journal of Literary Studies*, 32(1), 2016, p. 43.

⁴⁷ P.N. Mwaura, "Gender and Power in African Christianity: African Instituted Churches and Pentecostal Churches," *African Christianity: An African Story*, Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 2005, p. 412.

poverty (SGD1) and hunger (SGD2), ensuring good health (SGD3), quality in education (SGD4), gender equality (SGD5), clean water and sanitation (SGD6) and decent work and economic growth (SGD8). The focus of this study is on the SDG 5, which aims at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. It is critical to note how gender equality is a key factor that informs the other sustainable development goals. While Griggs and others argue for poverty reduction and the protection of the earth's life support as the twin priorities of the SDGs,⁴⁸ this chapter proposes gender equality (SDG5) as a priority. Gender equality is a prerequisite for community building and development. Gender inequalities between men and women bear an influence on health, education and economic growth. For instance, the health challenge of HIV/AIDS lies in the gender inequalities between men and women, which render women vulnerable and unable to negotiate for safer sex. Gender-based violence stems from the unequal power relations between men and women. With regards to economic growth, women are denied space to fully express their potential in the economic sphere. Such limitation of women's economic muscle result in poverty. Statistics indicate that women form the majority of the poor people in the world. It is against this background that this chapter argues that fighting gender inequalities should be the entry point on the road to attaining sustainable development goals. According to the United Nations Development Programme, ending all forms of discrimination against women is crucial to accelerating sustainable development; and empowering women helps in driving up economic growth and development.⁴⁹ Given that this chapter's focus is Sustainable Development Goal 5, it is critical to explain the key characteristics of SDG5.

⁴⁸ D. Griggs et al, "Sustainable Development Goals for People and Planet," *Nature*, 495(7441), 2013.

⁴⁹ sustainable-development-goals/goal-5-gender-equality.html.

Sustainable Development Goal 5: Key Tenets

The key tenets of SDG5 lie in equality between men and women. SDG 5 emphasizes ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.⁵⁰ SDG 5 seeks to ensure women's effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life and to undertake reforms that give women equal rights to economic resources, land and property ownership.⁵¹ This is the basis for any discussion on the SDG5. Whereas UN Women realizes the need for deep legal and legislative changes to attain equality, there is also a need to consider the role of religion.⁵² This chapter proposes the use of religious resources in addressing gender inequalities. This is not to dismiss laws and policies, but it is to appreciate the role that religion can play if used positively. Unlike laws and policies, religious teachings and doctrines are not far removed from people and they form part of their everyday interactions. such, they face less resistance. Teachings from religions, therefore, appear to be more practical than theoretical. This, therefore, justifies the need to turn to religious resources in addressing gender inequalities.

Having presented this background on religion, gender, and development, it is necessary to present a case study to substantiate the argument of the role that religion has taken in the public sphere with regard to gender and development. The next section will present a case study of how ZAOGA

⁵⁰ F. Fariello et al, "The World Bank Legal Review," vol. 7, *Financing and Implementing the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, World Bank Publications, 2016.

⁵¹ www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-5-gender-equality [30.6.2017].

⁵² UN Women Constitutional Database. 2014.

FIF is embracing the SDG5 through its teachings and policies to empower women.

ZAOGA FIF: Key Partner in SGD5

With regards to the position of women in ZAOGA FIF, several studies have been conducted. Biri, Musoni and Musevenzo and others show how ZAOGA empowers women economically.⁵³ Bhatasara and others conducted a study on women and leadership in ZAOGA FIF.⁵⁴ Biri provides an analysis of ZAOGA FIF's response to sexual and gender-based violence.⁵⁵ Some of her studies indicate how ZAOGA has been reluctant on matters of equality.⁵⁶ Biri notes how the church can be oppressing and disempowering through its teachings and (mis)interpretation of texts.⁵⁷ From previous studies, it is clear that ZAOGA FIF has

⁵³ K. Biri, "The Response of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) to Gender-Based Violence: An Analysis," in *Justice not Silence: Churches Facing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence*, eds E. Chitando and S. Chirongoma, Cape Town: African Sun Media, 2013; P. Musoni, "African Pentecostalism and Sustainable Development: A Study on Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Forward in Faith Church," 2.10, 2013, pp. 75-82; L.L. Musevenzo et al., *Faith Based Institutions and Women Economic Empowerment: A Gendered Analysis of ZAOGA FIF*, in *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection*, Bindura, Zimbabwe vol. 5(5), 2017.

⁵⁴ S. Bhatasara et al., "Women and Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe: Negotiating Leadership in the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God 'Forward in Faith' Ministry," Harare in *Pentecostals and the Body*, M. Wilkinson, and P. Althouse, *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion*, Vol 8, 2017.

⁵⁵ K. Biri, "The Response of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) to Gender-based Violence: An Analysis," in *Justice not Silence: Churches Facing Sexual and Gender-based Violence*, eds E. Chitando and S. Chirongoma, Cape Town: African Sun Media, 2013.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ K. Biri, "Proverbs 31 Woman: Pentecostalism and Disempowering Femininities and Oppressive Masculinities in Zimbabwe: A Critique," in J. Hunter

both positive and negative effects with regards to the position of women in the church. Whereas this chapter also acknowledges some negative traits in ZAOGA FIF with regards to gender, the chapter's aim is to extract resources within the church that are emancipating to women. While it is easy to locate stereotypes of religion as male-dominated and hierarchical, sometimes religious traditions stand firmly on the side of the oppressed and disadvantaged.⁵⁸ It is from these traits in religion that religion becomes a useful resource in promoting gender equality.

Several studies on religion and gender focus on the negative aspect of religion. The problem of coming up with religious strategies to address gender inequalities lies in how so much effort has been concentrated on the blame of religion. There has been less attention on how religion can be used to emancipate women. There is need to focus on the positive that can be derived out of the church. While elements of female subjugation and perpetuation of patriarchy can still be noticed, ZAOGA FIF is proving to be proactive in issues relating to gender equality. This can be derived from how the church embraces female leadership, runs empowerment projects for women, the church's position on sexual and gender-based violence, as well as its stance on transforming masculinities. It is from these that ZAOGA FIF becomes a key partner in the sustainable development agenda for 2030. ZAOGA FIF's involvement with women show signs of meeting the key tenets of the SDG 5 - leadership, economic empowerment, fighting gender-based violence. Examples for this study are derived from ZAOGA FIF Rimuka District, Zimbabwe, Ezekiel Guti University Region, and Kuwadzana Extension District.

and J. Kugler (eds), *The Bible and Violence in Africa: Papers Presented at the BiAS Meeting 2014 in Windhoek (Namibia)*, with some additional contributions, Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, vol. 20, 2016.

⁵⁸ M. Clarke, *Understanding the Nexus between Religion and Development*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013.

ZAOGA and Female Leadership

In terms of leadership, ZAOGA FIF is one of the Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe that has embraced female headship in the church and its organizations. Several churches combat female leadership based on 1 Corinthians 14:34-36 and 2 Timothy 2:11-14. According to these scriptures, women are not permitted to speak in church but must learn in submissiveness. Religious feminism dismisses these attitudes as a misinterpretation of religious texts. Hayashida indicates how women are fully capable and responsible to hold a leadership position within the church without restrictions.⁵⁹ Mwaura illustrates how women play greater roles in Pentecostal churches.⁶⁰ Attitudes towards female leadership have been positive in Pentecostalism.⁶¹

Contrary to these oppressive biblical texts (or their oppressive interpretation), ZAOGA FIF accepts female leadership. This is evidenced by the presence of women from the lowest positions to the apex of the church leadership. Women in ZAOGA are permitted to become pastors, elders, deaconesses, and lay leaders. There is no limit in occupying leadership positions in ZAOGA FIF.⁶² Unlike in most churches where the wife of a

⁵⁹ N.O. Hayashida, *Women and Leadership in the Baptist Convention of South Africa*, Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2005.

⁶⁰ P.N. Mwaura, "Gender and Power in African Christianity: African Instituted Churches and Pentecostal Churches," *African Christianity: An African Story*, Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 2005.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² K. Biri, "Proverbs 31 Woman: Pentecostalism and Disempowering Femininities and Oppressive Masculinities in Zimbabwe," A Critique," in J. Hunter and J. Kugler (eds), *The Bible and Violence in Africa*, Papers presented at the BiAS meeting 2014 in Windhoek (Namibia), with some Additional Contributions Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, vol. 20, 2016.

pastor is *mai mufundisi* (pastor's wife),⁶³ in ZAOGA FIF, the wife of a pastor is ordained as a pastor in her own right. This, therefore, makes the gender ratio of male to female pastors in ZAOGA almost balanced. In 2012, ZAOGA ordained Eunor Guti, the wife of the founder, as the Archbishop of ZAOGA FIF.⁶⁴ Ordaining Eunor Guti as an archbishop presents us with evidence of how ZAOGA FIF is conscious of gender equality and how it embraces female headship even at upper echelons. However, the ordination of Eunor Guti can be criticized and politicized as a way of securing leadership of the church in the hands of the Guti family. One can argue that the Guti family runs the church as a family ministry. It appears Eunor Guti inherited Ezekiel Guti's position as a form of securing legacy. Be that as it may, there is need to appreciate ZAOGA FIF's move in promoting female leadership.

Ezekiel Guti acknowledges women as the backbone of the church.⁶⁵ It is from these assertions that one can note how women in ZAOGA FIF occupy a special position. Despite being a patriarchal church, ZAOGA FIF has been and is continuing to make efforts to empower women. As it is the case with female pastors, ZAOGA FIF's female elders and deaconesses attain these positions, not based on being married to a male Elder or Deacon. ZAOGA FIF also empowers single mothers (known as *masinguru*, "singles") to be elders and deaconesses in the church. In cases where women are believers and their husbands are not members of the church (*madhibhora*), the church still qualifies such women to

⁶³ For a study of the Baptist Convention of Malawi, where this is the case, see: Molly Longwe, *African Feminist Theology and Baptist Pastors' Wives*, Mzuzu: Luviri Press, 2019.

⁶⁴ K. Biri, "Migration: Transnationalism and the Shaping of Zimbabwean Pentecostal Spirituality," *African Diaspora*, 7, 2014.

⁶⁵ www.fifmi.org [1.7.2017].

become church elders. However, the church disqualifies couples without a marriage certificate to become elders and deacons.⁶⁶

From what I gathered in the field, women access leadership in the church from as early as children's ministry, known in ZAOGA FIF as Young Generation ministry. This is a ministry of children up to the age of 18. Analyzing from Young Generation leadership of ZEGU Region, girls occupy most of the leadership positions in this ministry. At the time of the study, the apex position (Chairperson) of the ZEGU Region Young Generation board was occupied by a girl.⁶⁷ It is from this that one can acknowledge how ZAOGA FIF is empowering women and girls at all levels.

Evidence of female leadership can also be derived from the church's faith-based institutions, for instance, the church's University. Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University (ZEGU) appointed a female vice-chancellor in 2016. ZEGU's first Dean of Students was female. It must be appreciated that the institution employs its staff based on merit and competence, thus both women and men compete on the same level. However, statistics at ZEGU show that women lecturers at the institution are outnumbered by men. This is due to the general absence of women in the higher echelons of academia to qualify them as lecturers.

Moreover, ZAOGA FIF accords women space to lead the Holy Communion. According to ZAOGA FIF's traditions, Elders lead the Holy Communion. The church does not discriminate based on gender; both men and women take part in leading the Holy Communion. However, from my observations of several Holy Communion services, as an insider participant, I observed how female elders are often relegated to domesticity, that is, the washing of hands and serving of the bread and

⁶⁶ ZEGU Region Sunday Service November 2016.

⁶⁷ Anonymous, ZAOGA FIF member, ZEGU, Bindura, 22.11.2016.

wine, while a male elder leads the Holy Communion and reads the Bible. It is also the responsibility of female elders to prepare the Holy Communion and wash utensils. One can argue that this is due to cultural roles which relegate women to domestic chores. Furthermore I acknowledge instances where ZAOGA FIF sometimes understands the division of labour in terms of gender. The church sometimes views women and girls as being responsible for sweeping the church and cooking for pastors at special events. This may be interpreted based on how members of this church have been socialized in patriarchal societies.

ZAOGA FIF and Women Empowerment

ZAOGA FIF has empowered women in various ways. Women's ministry in ZAOGA FIF is a diverse group comprising married women, single women (*masinguru*), and Deborahs (*madhibhora*). Although they have different ministries in which they receive teachings which are specific to their marital status, these women all fall under the Gracious Women Ministry. The ministry is also known as the Go Quickly Ministry. In addition, ZAOGA FIF also has a Girls' Ministry; these are referred to as 'GOQ' (Girls of Quality).

Economic empowerment is one of the popular forms of women empowerment in ZAOGA FIF. There is a popular scheme in ZAOGA FIF called Talents (*matarenda*), which has empowered many women.⁶⁸ *Kushanda*

⁶⁸ K. Biri, "Migration: Transnationalism and the Shaping of Zimbabwean Pentecostal Spirituality," *African Diaspora*, 7, 2014; P. Musoni, "African Pentecostalism and Sustainable Development: A Study on the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa, Forward in Faith Church," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2(10), 2013; L.L. Musevenzo et al, "Faith Based Institutions and Women Economic Empowerment: A Gendered Analysis of ZAOGA FIF in Bindura, Zimbabwe," *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection*, vol. 5(5), 2017; S. Bhatasara et al., "Women and Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe: Negotiating Leadership in the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God 'Forward in Faith' Ministry, Harare," in "Pentecostals and

matarenda, which literally means working talents, is a common ideology in ZAOGA which paved the way for many women to engage in entrepreneurship. Members of ZAOGA FIF consider working talents as a school of self-enhancement. Although the ideology was to aid in church projects, the concept was translated to enhance individuals. Gutu introduced the concept of Home Talents, known as (*matarenda emudzimba*). Profits from these Talents projects are for self-sustenance. Home Talents saw many women buying houses, residential stands, and cars during the 2014-2015 Home Talents Project.⁶⁹

ZAOGA FIF beneficiaries of the Talents projects explained how it has been their source of survival and hope. One single woman Elder (*musinguru*) notes how she appreciates talents.

‘mwanangu ini church ino ndinoida, ndinovimba munhu waMwari akamutsirwa matarenda kuti isu shirikadzi nevana vedu tirame. Tapinza vana zvikoro netarenda, tararama netarenda’ - (‘my child, I love this church. I believe the man of God was given this vision of Talents for us as widows and our children to survive. We are sending our children to school with Talents profits, we have survived with Talents profits’).⁷⁰

Biri also indicates how single women have managed to raise their families due to Talents.⁷¹ The above quoted Elder further explained how the ministry is of great benefit to women in her single ladies’ ministry. She explains how Talents have helped young single women who were divorced to forward their lives without resorting to prostitution or other ethically problematic means of survival. However, from her explanation

the Body,” Wilkinson, M. and Althouse, P., *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion*, vol 8, 2017.

⁶⁹ Anonymous, ZAOGA FIF member, ZEGU, Bindura, 15.10.2016.

⁷⁰ Anonymous, ZAOGA FIF, Rimuka, Kadoma, 5.6.2016.

⁷¹ K. Biri, Migration, "Transnationalism and the Shaping of Zimbabwean Pentecostal Spirituality," *African Diaspora*, 7, 2014.

one can note strong patriarchal influences that men are the breadwinners and women struggle economically in the absence of men.

Girls in ZAOGA FIF also benefit from the Talents scheme. From the Girls' Service that I attended, the girls indicated confidence in how the Talents have empowered them to be financially independent and not to succumb to the temptations of dating men for money.⁷² Various girls testified about their different experiences of how they get money for their upkeep through working Talents. Most girls in ZAOGA FIF engage in small-scale businesses of selling sweets, cosmetics or undergarments.⁷³ It is from this that one appreciates how ZAOGA is empowering women economically, a critical step towards gender equality.

Apart from Talents, the church has been a platform for women to develop different skills. For instance, in March 2016, ZAOGA FIF Kuwadzana Extension District created an opportunity for women to attend a six-week course in cooking and baking at a fee of \$50. Kuwadzana Extension District also introduced courses in dressmaking and detergent making.⁷⁴ In April 2016 Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University in partnership with the Chartered Institute for Customer Relationship Management (CICRM) introduced a short course in Customer Relations. Some of ZAOGA FIF members from Bindura Province, Harare East South Province and Kuwadzana Extension District attended the course. The course was also open to women and in some Districts more women than men enrolled. Furthermore, Rimuka District has an onsite Dressmaking School. Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University runs short courses in Bee Keeping and Mushroom growing. The courses are sometimes advertised in church (ZEGU Region), and women are encouraged to enroll for such courses.

⁷² Girls Fellowship Service, ZAOGA FIF, Rimuka District, Kadoma, 2013.

⁷³ Anonymous, ZAOGA FIF member, ZEGU, Bindura, 22.11.2016.

⁷⁴ Interview. 17.7.2017.

Kuwadzana Extension District encourages women to get driver's licences. At an average level, fewer women than men in Zimbabwe feel the need to obtain a driver's licence. In their ladies' meetings, women are encouraged to empower themselves by getting a driver's licence. In 2015, Kuwadzana Extension Ladies Ministry invited the National Vehicle Inspection Department (VID) at their district to accord women the opportunity to write provisional license tests. One can, therefore, deduce from this that the teachings from these Ladies Ministry are not only theoretical, but practical. Women are also encouraged to get passports. Apart from getting these documents, women without Ordinary Level education are also encouraged to (re)write and attain at least five O-level passes. This shows how the church is promoting gender equality by empowering women in their ministries. Ladies Meetings, *Chinayi* (Thursdays) have been turned into places of women development.

Nevertheless, Biri argues that despite economic empowerment, ZAOGA FIF promotes gender inequalities through its teaching of women's submission. For Biri, such teachings defeat the economic advantages they would have gained.⁷⁵ Although the church promotes gender inequality as argued by Biri, this chapter acknowledges how the church has empowered women. Talents have empowered women economically and created self-dependence both for employed and unemployed women. Economic dependence translates into gross inequalities; thus, the church should be appreciated for giving women space in the economic sector. Various skills that the church offers to women are necessary conditions for development and self-enhancement. As noted earlier, women empowerment is one of the key tenets of the SDG5. This study, therefore,

⁷⁵ K. Biri, "The response of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) to Gender-based Violence: An Analysis," in E. Chitando and S. Chirongoma (eds), *Justice not Silence: Churches Facing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence*, Cape Town: African Sun Media, 2013.

argues for the need to appreciate the above-explained resources within the church which are vital to development.

Masculinities in ZAOGA FIF

While the focus has been on femininities in explaining the role of ZAOGA FIF's efforts to promote gender equality, it is essential to analyze masculinities in the church to assess whether ZAOGA FIF is building transformative masculinities that appreciate equality between men and women. ZAOGA FIF has two major men's ministries. These are Men's Ministry and Boys Fellowship. The married men in ZAOGA are also known as Men of Integrity.⁷⁶ Although traits of patriarchy can be noticed in the church, ZAOGA FIF thrives to build transformative masculinities. According to Guti as quoted by Biri,

The church needs security from Jesus, so does a woman from a man. Husbands are to provide security to their wives. This is why she was made from a portion taken from the left side of a man next to the heart and just under the arm to be well secured, protected and loved.⁷⁷

While Biri interprets the above as a teaching that cultivates dominating attitudes in men, I interpret it as a teaching that promotes positive masculinities that are loving and non-violent to women. Such kind of masculinities must be cultivated in a society faced with gross sexual and gender-based violence. Chitando and van Klinken also indicate how

⁷⁶ www.fifmi.org/content/mens-ministry [2.7.2017].

⁷⁷ K. Biri, "The Response of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) to Gender-based Violence: An Analysis," in E. Chitando and S. Chirongoma (eds), *Justice not Silence: Churches Facing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence*, Cape Town: African Sun Media, 2013, p. 160.

ZAOGA FIF teaches men to be loving, non-violent and accommodating.⁷⁸ In an interview with a ZAOGA FIF male member, the man indicated how the church teaches men to be responsible. Although they rarely have meetings, as is the case with 'Go Quickly' women's ministry, Men of Integrity also meet and get teachings on being responsible family men. Men in ZAOGA FIF are taught how women are more responsible than men and for that reason, women must keep bank cards and plan how to use their husbands' earnings responsibly.⁷⁹ Men are also discouraged from making decisions as individuals, but as a family. The interviewee also showed how the issue of making decisions as a family is connected to the concept of Family Conventions in ZAOGA FIF. These are annual three-day family conferences. The conference comes in sessions where men, women, and children are separated into groups. The conferences' main mandate is to teach what is expected of each family member in a home and how husband, wife, and children ought to relate in a family setup. In some sessions, couples discuss together how they should relate as equal partners. The participant noted how the Family Convention is a good platform for men to be taught about the qualities of being a responsible man.⁸⁰ It is from these conferences that one can deduce how ZAOGA FIF is not only concerned about the spiritual welfare, but also about the social life of how men and women should relate in society. According to ZAOGA FIF's doctrine, women are taught to 'take their God-appointed position beside their husbands, not below or above (Genesis 2:18).'⁸¹ Biri, however, criticizes this motto of a partnership

⁷⁸ E. Chitando and A. van Klinken, "Masculinities: HIV and Religion in Africa," in E. Tomalin (ed), *The Routledge Handbook of Religions and Global Development*, London: Routledge, 2015.

⁷⁹ Anonymous, ZAOGA FIF, Telephone Interview, 30.6.2017.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ www.fifmi.org Date [1.7.2017].

between men and women as theoretical and contradictory to Eunor Guti's teachings on women's submission.⁸²

While the church has some patriarchal traits, doctrines of treating men and women as equal partners are crucial on the road to attain gender justice. Biri, however, notes instances where the church subjugates women by some of its teachings. She gives an example of how some of Ezekiel Guti's teachings encourage men to control and exercise lordship over their wives. According to Guti as quoted by Biri, "a man has two needs:⁸³ lordship and the need to be respected. If the needs of lordship are not met by the wife, a man will look somewhere for them."⁸⁴ In light of this, there is a need for the church to adopt positive teachings that are affirming to women, while simultaneously nurturing redemptive masculinities.

Boys' Fellowships also get teachings on how to be responsible young men. Boys' fellowship, commonly known as 'Boys of Thunder,' is a ministry of unmarried men. These men assert that they are trained to grow into responsible men and husbands. According to Boys' Fellowship teachings, being the head of the house comes with responsibility and to be the head of the house is to lead by example, and not to abuse.⁸⁵ In addition, assessing from ZAOGA FIF 2016 Talents, one can appreciate how the church is building positive masculinities. As mentioned earlier, talents were mostly associated with women; this might stem from how generally very few men feel comfortable in engaging in small-scale

⁸² K. Biri, "The Response of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) to Gender-Based Violence: An Analysis," in E. Chitando and S. Chirongoma (eds), *Justice not Silence: Churches Facing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence*, Cape Town: African Sun Media, 2013.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 159.

⁸⁵ Anonymous, ZAOGA FIF, Telephone Interview 30 June 2017.

business. In 2016 several men took part in Talents through small-scale businesses. Men from ZEGU Region were selling roasted nuts, sweets and snacks, among other items. This should be appreciated as a significant move in a society faced with economic crises and gross unemployment.

ZAOGA FIF's Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Examining the role that the church can take to promote gender equality and its influence in development cannot be complete without assessing the church's responses to gender based violence. According to Sen, violence is a hindrance to development, a limitation to effectiveness and an offense against human development.⁸⁶ Sen further indicates how violence is an obstacle and a barrier to full participation. Biri indicated how ZAOGA FIF promotes SGBV through masculinities and femininities that it nurtures.⁸⁷ Biri notes the reluctance of Day-to-Day Council to address SGBV. The Day-to-Day Council is a board responsible for judging issues that are brought forward by members of the church. Biri proposes for this board to take issues of SGBV seriously.⁸⁸ Although church members emphasized how they are discouraged from being violent, from what I gathered, apart from teachings on love and respect

⁸⁶ P. Sen, "Development Practice and Violence against Women," in C. Sweetman (ed), *Violence Against Women*, Oxford: Oxfam, 1998.

⁸⁷ K. Biri, "The Response of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) to Gender-based Violence: An Analysis," in E. Chitando and S. Chirongoma (eds), *Justice not Silence: Churches Facing Sexual and Gender-based Violence*, Cape Town: African Sun Media, 2013.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

for women, there is no sound policy to react to issues of sexual and gender-based violence. Biri also observed the same in her 2013 study.⁸⁹

One Elder explained concepts in ZAOGA FIF that help in regulating SGBV. Firstly, she noted the *masofa* doctrine as a good practice that can protect women from violence. *Masofa* is a concept where a man approaches a woman he loves through the Pastor or Elder.

Tinokurudzira masofa nekuti anobatsira kuziva hunhu hwemunhu musati mapinda mumba. Kunyanya kumwanasikana masofa anomuchengetedza kunyaya dzepremarital sex, abuse neku-zongomitiswa osiiwa. (We encourage the *masofa* doctrine because it helps in knowing one's character before marriage. Masofa protects the girl from premarital sex, abuse and being impregnated and dumped.)⁹⁰

While she notes the above as the advantage of *masofa*, my analysis of the concept limits the girl child to wait to be approached by men from church only, leaving women with no freedom to be with men outside the church. From a conversation with the girls, most of them indicated how they do not appreciate *masofa*. Some noted the challenge of having to wait for long to be approached and in some cases, one is never approached. Some girls noted that some boys in the church do not meet the standards of their 'ideal man.' Although still practiced, the concept of *masofa* is no longer followed by everyone. Another challenge I noted with the concept is how it does not guarantee protection after marriage. Many women have gone through *masofa*, yet they face issues of violence in their marriages.

Secondly, the Elder noted the concept of "*pasi peshamu*" (under discipline) as a concept that can address SGBV. *Pasi peshamu* is a disciplinary concept to punish members who do not adhere to the church's doctrines and Christian principles. Some of the reasons why a church

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Anonymous, ZAOGA FIF, Tynwald, Harare, 18.7.2017.

member can be put under discipline include adultery, fornication, prostitution, elopement marriages and abuse. The interviewed Elder noted that to be put under discipline comes with disgrace and shame, as one will not be allowed to take part in any activities in the church. She, therefore, views it as a good concept, especially regarding protection of women from abuse. However, she fails to account for how some men abuse their wives and instill fear in them not to share with anyone. There is therefore need for concrete policies to address SGBV in ZAOGA FIF. Sweetman speaks of how laws alone cannot be the only solution to violence against women.⁹¹ The government passed the Domestic Violence Act Chapter 5:16 2007 to protect women from abuse, yet cases of violence continue to increase each year. Churches need to engage fully and take a role in addressing the challenge.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Despite being often patriarchal and androcentric, religion is not always bad news to women. It is without doubt that religion has been used as a weapon for female subjugation through misinterpreting religious texts. However, religion contains resources within it that are essential to attain gender equality. As discussed in this chapter, ZAOGA FIF is on course to attain gender equality. Most of ZAOGA FIF teachings and practices related to gender tally with the key tenets of the sustainable development agenda. Through embracing female leadership, women economic empowerment, transforming masculinities and responding to SGBV (though a lot more still needs to be done with regards to SGBV), ZAOGA FIF is pursuing the Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030 to attain the Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG5). For the 17 Sustainable Goals to be successful, there is need to integrate women at every level. There is a need for development practitioners to formally engage the

⁹¹ C. Sweetman, *Violence against Women*, Oxford: Oxfam, 1998.

church in addressing unequal power relations between men and women. If appropriated well, religion can contribute to gender equality and development. It is against this background that this study recommends the following:

1. ZAOGA FIF has to work closely with existing Development and Gender service providers and the justice system in providing collaborative community-based initiatives. This can be done through sensitizer workshops, seminars, and public talks.
2. ZAOGA FIF conducts leadership conferences for pastors, elders and deacons every year (Deeper Life Conferences). The study recommends the need to include gender equality teachings in the agenda to target large audiences of church leadership.
3. The study proposes curriculum review for Africa Multination for Christ College (AMMFC) Bible School (ZAOGA FIF training institute for pastors) to include issues of gender equality and sexual and gender-based violence, to develop a generation of gender-sensitive pastors.
4. Practical solutions to address SGBV, through challenging violence against women from a theological perspective. Pastors should address issues of SGBV in their sermons.
5. Positive reading of the Bible.
6. Re-interpreting “oppressive” religious texts and doctrines.⁹²

⁹² Of help in this process could be: Rachel NyaGondwe Fiedler, Johannes Hofmeyr and Klaus Fiedler, *African Feminist Hermeneutics. An Evangelical Reflection*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2016.

Chapter 11

Holisticism as Key Aspect of Development in Pentecostalism: A Study on the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe

Fairchild Siyawamwaya

Introduction

Pentecostalism is arguably one of the fastest growing Christian movements in Africa and of course on a global scale. Consequently, Pentecostalism has attracted much scholarly interest. What is interesting in the development of Pentecostalism is that this is a movement that initially castigated affluence but in recent times, the idea of material acquisition has become sacrosanct or *sine-qua-non*. What is emerging is that Pentecostalism has become the antithesis of missionary Christianity that has been criticized for failing to answer the throbbing of the African man. To package the gospel of Jesus Christ in a way that would appeal to the African man and in a manner that would help address the socio-economic turmoil in Zimbabwe, many Pentecostals have adopted the idea of holisticism.¹ This emanates from the fact that Pentecostal churches have realized the need for a paradigm shift of not only focusing on the spiritual aspect of the individual but also on physical and mental well-being.

¹ G. Muzorewa, *The Origins and Development of African Theology*, Maryknoll: Orbis, 1985.

Based on the argument, several scholars have been convinced that Pentecostal churches can be relevant in propelling the economic progression of its members. Musoni, for instance, applauded ZAOGA (Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa) in full for a remarkable job in sustainable development.² He observed that ZAOGA has managed to provide health and education amongst other social amenities. As such, there has always been a predilection to romanticize Pentecostalism as an architect of socio-economic transformation. In the same vein, Freeman has also argued that Pentecostalism has contributed immensely towards socio-economic transformation. As a result, there has been the temptation to say that Pentecostalism has a critical role to play towards sustainable development. Nevertheless, the claims that have been made by scholars on Pentecostalism pertaining to its role in development cannot be accepted without further interrogation. The questions that needs to be asked are: (1) To what extent is it feasible for the church to engage in worldly material pursuits while at the same time retaining the efficacy of the gospel? (2) To what extent have Pentecostal churches empowered their adherents? (3) Have development discourses in Pentecostalism taken cognizance of the African worldview? This chapter attempts to answer these and many other questions regarding the role of Pentecostalism in bringing about socio-economic transformation.

In a bid to explore the role of Pentecostalism towards the attainment of socio-economic transformation, the chapter deals with on the Apostolic Faith Mission. This is a deliberate limitation, as I did not want to generalize across all Pentecostals cognizant that there is no single theological criterion through which one can unpack Pentecostalism. Besides, in Zimbabwe, AFM is the oldest Pentecostal church that is argued to have

² P. Musoni, "African Pentecostalism and Sustainable Development," www.ijhssi.org, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, vol. 2, 2013.

inspired other Pentecostal churches. As such, it is my assumption that by looking at the salient features of AFM one would therefore be able to get a meaningful glimpse of what is happening across the Pentecostal movement in Zimbabwe.

Holisticism: Unpacking the Concept

Holisticism was rife in Africa's traditional education that concerns itself in addressing multifarious situations that Africans met in their existence. In this regard, holisticism encouraged the development of an individual in totality. In this periscope, the term has been adopted to refer to the quest by Pentecostalism to address the physical, mental and spiritual needs of individuals. This would therefore be epitomized as a necessity for development as the physical needs of individuals like shelter and food, among others, would be met.

Development: A Predicament of Definition

The term development is relative as it means different things to different people and it has been defined from various perspectives. It is against this backdrop that it seems desirable from the very outset to explicate the specific sense in which the term development has been conceptualized in this chapter. I have found it necessary to expound the concept of development based on its characteristic features. In this case, development is the access to, control of, ownership and utilization of resources by the indigenes. As such, development must not be perceived as an imported philosophy. This kind of development goes in the direction of what might be called participatory development by other writers. Any form of development that does not take into consideration the throbbing of the indigenes is tantamount to dishonesty. Such kind of development can only succeed in promoting what has been dubbed as social death; a kind of development that would see the indigenous being relegated to the fringes

of the cosmos. To fully understand my concept of development that is centred upon the indigenous, one must appreciate the African worldview.

African Worldview

The concept of development is something that has been in Africa from time immemorial. Africa had its own traditional way of development prior to colonization. It is only that this kind of development was hijacked and disturbed by the colonial masters. Although the concept of development in pristine African culture can be illustrated using different examples, I will only explore the land question. In Africa, land was the major employer of the Africans as people could partake in different economic activities such as pottery, farming, mining, and hunting among others. It is not my intention to portray a picture of Africa that never was. Nevertheless, I would dare to opine that in Africa's development discourse, there was no concept of unemployment, as virtually everybody would earn a living due to interaction with the land. The colonial masters therefore created unemployment as they displaced Africans from their land leaving them with no access to one of the essential means of production.

In the novel, *Ancestors*, Chenjerai Hove speaks hard on the issue of displacement when he chronicles that, "It is sad how the Gotami were removed from their land. One day a white man came driving in a land-rover and said to the chief, 'This land no longer belongs to you. By next week when the moon shines, you and your family move to the smoke blue hills in the distance. I know you will talk to me about the shrines and the graves of your ancestors, you can take them and rebury them there.'³ The concept of displacement spelt disaster for the African, as

³ Chenjerai Hove, *Ancestors*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1997.

their spirituality was devaluated. This is a position that resonates with Lord MacCaulay's speech to the British Parliament.

I have travelled across the breadth and length of India and I have not seen anyone who is a beggar and I have not seen one who is a thief. Such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such calibre that I do not think we will be able to colonize this country unless we break the very backbone of this nation which is her spiritual and cultural heritage and therefore I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for the Indians think that everything that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own and lose their self-esteem, their nature self and they will become what we want them to be, a truly dominated nation.⁴

The above quotation gives a picture of how the colonial masters disrupted the philosophy of their colonies. In a Zimbabwean context, the whites can be held responsible for intruding the Shona mode of production. As emphasized by Vengeyi, the Shona society's communal stage was mainly distinguished by the fact that property, especially land, was communally owned and the products of labour were communally shared according to need.⁵ This mode of production was synonymous to the Israelites' mode of production as emphasized by Gottwald.⁶ Mosala also comes in handy in this discussion. He postulates that there was no space

⁴ T.B. Macaulay, "The Speech that never was Delivered," <https://the wire in/history/Macaulay-speech-never-delivered> [20.4.2016].

⁵ Obvious Vengeyi, "Zimbabwean Poverty is Man-made! 'Demystifying Poverty by Appealing to the Prophetic Book of Amos: General," *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, 107, 2011, pp. 223-237.

⁶ N.K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh. A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 BCE*, Sheffield Academic Press, 1981.

for individual hoarding and surplus.⁷ This therefore represented a function of the low level of development of the forces of production.

Theoretical Framework

The study has adopted Amartya Sen's concept of *development as freedom* to be a working philosophy to underpin the study. As emphasized by Sen, development takes place as a process that aims at expanding substantive freedom and this can only be achieved through the intervention of human agency.⁸ By expanding substantive freedom Sen endeavoured for people to attain those variables that would enrich their quality of life. In this regard, development aims at freedom using the exercise of free human agency as the very means to achieve it. For Amartya Sen, development is a very multi-layered term. He coins constitutive freedom as that which provides the individual capability to act as an agent.⁹ An individual agency, who operates in many fields is obliged to perform a duty, for instance, in active political participation at the local and higher level, in determining the shape of one's social and economic development. The substantive freedom an individual enjoys allows him to be fully fused in these diverse fields of human quest as a participator or contributor.

Methodological Considerations

This chapter appeals to methodological triangulation and this has been prompted by the desire to increase validity and reliability of results. The phenomenological method has been used to gather data for this study. The method has the potential to allow one to look at various phenomena

⁷ I. Mosala, *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.

⁸ A. Sen, *Development as Freedom*, New York: Alfred Nopf, 1999.

⁹ A. Sen, *The Idea of Justice*, Cambridge MA: Belknap Press, 2010.

without being influenced by preconceived ideas or prejudice. This method allows the researcher to have a balanced and unbiased research.¹⁰ Nevertheless, some scholars have some misgivings pertaining to the applicability of the phenomenological method. Despite the shortcomings of the method, the idea that it gives primacy to the subject under discussion has been instructive to this study. I will be critically faithful to reproduce the beliefs of the AFM members. However, I cannot claim to be purely objective because there are bound to be presuppositions that I hold unconsciously due to who I am and my historical and cultural background.

In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews were employed in this study mainly because they give further room for probing when clarity is needed. Although I got information from a few ordinary members of the AFM church, much of the data came from my students in Religious Studies who are members of the church. This explains why I got critical discourses on AFM that might not have come had I relied on ordinary members of the church who in many instances might have eulogized the church.

AFM: A Brief History

The history of AFM has been subject to scholarly efforts as various accounts have been proffered pertaining to the origin of the church. It is imperative for one to bear in mind that despite the diverse accounts on the origin of the AFM, authors from different perspectives and oral traditionalists are quite agreed that AFM has its root in South Africa. Benny Hwata did an immaculate job to trace the origin of AFM in

¹⁰ Mapuranga, Chitando and Gunda in Ezra Chitando, Masiwa Ragies Gunda, Joachim Kügler (eds), *Prophets, Profits and the Bible in Zimbabwe: Festschrift for Aynos Masotcha Moyo*, Bamberg University Press, 2013.

Zimbabwe. It is generally acknowledged that the AFM came to Zimbabwe through South Africa by migrant workers as they returned from their work in South Africa. The bulk of these people had experienced conversion through the evangelistic work of John G. Lake and Hezmalhach who had established themselves in South Africa.

The preliminary work of the AFM church within the Zimbabwean context is dated to 1915 and it was inaugurated through the strenuous efforts of Zacharias Manamela. Manamela's efforts were then endorsed by the AFM in South Africa.¹¹ It is against this backdrop that Booysen was chosen to be caretaker of the work. He was then compelled to look for registration of the church by the then colonial government. Mr Kogbe succeeded Manamela and worked under the supervision of Booysen. Kogbe is argued to have been mightily used of God in divine healing. That AFM started in 1915 makes it to be the oldest Pentecostal church in Zimbabwe. As such, many would think of it to be influencing other Pentecostals. This has therefore been the reason I have deliberately chosen AFM in a bid to unpack the nexus between Pentecostalism and the concept of development.

AFM and the Quest for Socio-Economic Transformation

AFM can be argued to have made some efforts towards socio-economic transformation, bearing in mind that Pentecostalism (AFM included) has been preaching against the idea of being affluent in its earlier stages. Nevertheless, there has been a rude awakening whereby the AFM church has now realized that it is a prerequisite for its members to be financially equipped, and the Exodus motif has been used to inspire such a movement. The Exodus can be best understood as the basis for liberation in

¹¹ For more on the South African background see: Ulf Strohschne, *Pentecostalism in Malawi. A History of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2005, pp. 26-38.

AFM. This stems from God's redemptive work that was seen when He championed the release of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. In AFM, this bondage is seen in issues that have to do with sickness, poverty, and evil spirits, to cite a few. Consequently, an individual must be delivered from these, as they hinder one's development. It is against this backdrop that Pentecostalism has proclaimed a more holistic gospel that includes deliverance from all types of oppression.¹² Of interest is how AFM is now endeavouring to catapult its members from poverty to abundance. This is metaphorical of the Israelites' escape from bondage in Egypt where there was lack to Canaan where there was abundance as epitomized in the overflow of milk and honey. This understanding of the Exodus has therefore inculcated a spirit of hard work within AFM members as they seek to be delivered from poverty. Poverty is anathematized as sin and that resonates well with Gutierrez' conception of poverty as sin. This entails that the poor people must be the artisans of their own liberation. Once one is delivered from the spirit of poverty, this is the pointer in the direction of what many within the Pentecostal fraternity would term development.

Interestingly, while the Exodus has been co-opted to sustain the ideology of liberation, this has its own dissenters. Mugambi questions the way biblical theologians are inclined to use the Exodus. For him, the Israelites moved over geographical space whereas the Africans remain in one locality.¹³ Nevertheless, Vellem is at pains to read Mugambi's conclusions, asking the question that needs to be asked: "Have we all crossed

¹² A. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, 2014.

¹³ J.K. Mugambi, *From Liberation to Reconstruction Theology*, Nairobi, AEAEP, 1999.

the Red Sea?”¹⁴ This would mean: have all adherents of AFM become wealthy? This has been the goal of the church as echoed in the words of the clergy. It is argued that when the missionaries preached the gospel, they did not tell Africans the way in which they were to prosper. The emphasis was that one should be saved and therefore painstaking efforts were made to ensure that one would attain the afterlife. This explains why Chitando posits that the missionary Christianity has focused on salvation, while prosperity theology focuses on the here and now.¹⁵ This is in tandem with African spirituality as Anderson puts it.¹⁶ To this effect, Pentecostalism has sought to empower its members to be self-reliant by starting their own businesses. Pentecostalism has equally provided its members with the much needed physical and emotional support so that its members can withstand the pressures that they encounter in the world.

As intimated earlier on, Pentecostalism has now seen that for the gospel to be relevant it must answer the throbbing questions of their members. This emanates from the fact that people have their needs that they want to be addressed when they come to church. This can be even addressed in the Bible tradition when the multitudes followed Jesus. It is against this backdrop that painstaking efforts are being made towards an attempt to empower congregants so that they become equipped as they serve Christ. This has prompted AFM to perceive salvation as a package. One of the interviewees reported that texts like Ephesians are being cited and it is argued that the lesser is enclosed in the greater. This entails that the physical blessing is enclosed in the spiritual. Therefore, God has been

¹⁴ V. Vellem, “Interlocution and Black Theology of Liberation in 21st Century,” *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, vol. 38, suppl 1.1, 2012.

¹⁵ Ezra Chitando (ed), *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books, 2013.

¹⁶ A. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, 2014.

conceived as a God of abundance. The moment the AFM has pre-occupied itself with the need to improve the social lives of its adherence this can be seen as a progression towards what is development.

Educational Achievements

It can be safely claimed that AFM has made some efforts towards the attainment of development through the provision of education. Since its establishment in Zimbabwe, AFM has managed to open church related learning centres. References can be made to Living Waters Theological Seminary and Rufaro Secondary School. What is worth to note about the latter is that it has even made education to be accessible to the financially disadvantaged children. The provision of education is a milestone achievement for Pentecostalism because there have been some condescending voices that have always criticized Pentecostalism for propagating a Gospel that makes its adherents to be concerned about futuristic phenomena like going to heaven at the expense of 'earthly things' like attaining educational qualification. Thus, Pentecostalism can be argued to have been a subject of misrepresentation, misinterpretation, and misunderstanding. This emanates from the fact that it has been perceived as a movement that has been concerned with spiritual issues only. The major concern of Pentecostalism has been to answer whether one has been saved. As such, education would naturally be comprehended as secular. Even the idea of having theological seminaries was opposed because the concern was that spiritual issues cannot be taught but should be a result of divine illumination. It is with this understanding therefore that one can see that AFM has been subject to a rude awakening. The church has now realized the importance of education.

Community Development

Community development is one of those areas that have seen people regarding AFM as critical in catering for the less privileged members of

the society. This is in agreement with James' thought that faith without works is dead.¹⁷ In a bid to answer some of the problems bedevilling the community, it has inaugurated Direct Outreach for Care and Support (DOCAS). DOCAS is a registered faith-based organization operating in Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe. By applying tried and tested development approaches, DOCAS uplifts the physical lives of the people it ministers to so that they integrate into the Christian community. With charitable deeds, DOCAS ministers to, among others, marginalized communities, commercial sex workers, drug addicts, sorcerers,¹⁸ orphans and vulnerable children.

Through development evangelism, DOCAS links the Christian community with other key development programmes that have traditionally been considered secular, yet they are important in human life. Some of these are HIV and AIDS, Child Rights Protection, Natural Resources Management and Technology. Of the three mentioned programmes, AFM's attempts to fight HIV and AIDS would be critical. The health of individuals is of paramount importance. In this regard, the desire and will to fight the HIV and AIDS pandemic is a prerequisite. In the early 2000s, HIV and AIDS was one of the major killer diseases in Africa. To make

¹⁷ James 2:16-26.

¹⁸ A sorcerer is a person who claims or is believed to have magical powers. A traditional healer is a person with a gift of healing using indigenous methods like plants, herbs and animals. Although a sorcerer might be confused with a traditional healer, there are some marked differences. A sorcerer uses supernatural powers with a goal to harm. On the contrary, a traditional healer uses established methods to cure for the good of humanity. A sorcerer is akin to a witch in the sense that they both attempt to control the supernatural through the use of magic. However, the former can perform in public whereas the latter operates in secret.

matters worse, many of the people who were dying were the economically active age group. It is imperative to bear in mind that a healthy person is more productive than a person living with HIV and AIDS. As such, the pandemic is in dire need of stringent measures to deal with it, especially within the church. I am of the view that since the dawn of the HIV and AIDS pandemic, it is the church that has been lagging behind, yet it has the capacity to introduce transformative attitudes to its members. Therefore, the realization of the church to deal with the HIV and AIDS pandemic is a welcome event, and this contributes towards the attainment of development.

Women Empowerment

AFM has tried to engage itself in women's empowerment. Bush and Folger have defined empowerment as restoration to the individual of a sense of his or her own value and strength of their own capacity to handle life's problems.¹⁹ In Africa, it has always been argued that women have been at the mercy of their male counterparts. They have been ostracized in social, economic, political and religious spheres. Throughout history, women have faced serious challenges under these oppressive and hard patriarchal systems.²⁰ The relegation of women to the fringes of the cosmos is painful and it has been one of the major obstacles to development in Africa.

In a bid to empower women within the church, AFM has organized groups in which women participate. Women have therefore the opportunity to mobilize funds through various projects that they do. These

¹⁹ Bush and Folger cited by Musoni in "African Pentecostalism and Sustainable Development," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, vol. 2, 2013, www.ijhssi.org,

²⁰ Ezra Chitando, *Acting in Hope: African Churches and HIV and AIDS*, Geneva: WCC, 2007.

women's groups are autonomous and the church leaders have no constitutional right to interfere. Bearing in mind that girls will one day graduate into womanhood, the church has also encouraged girls to be self-reliant. One interviewee remarked, "As girls we are being taught to work with our hands. That is why you see that a lot of girls in our church are doing their own projects that range from hairdressing or dressmaking to catering, among others."²¹ Such efforts by the church can be regarded as essential, as through the involvement of women in the economic fraternity, sustainability can be achieved.

Some Critical Reflections

Inasmuch as there have been attempts by the AFM to champion development, there are several misgivings about the way in which resource mobilization is being done. In a way, some people have expressed concern that church may be promoting kleptocracy, because most of the people who are rich within the church are the people with influential positions like pastors, bishops, or overseers. This reality has not been interrogated by uncritical believers as this has been heavily entrenched within a theology of legitimization. By theology of legitimization, I am referring to a situation whereby the elite justifies the status quo, so that the prevalent situation would be seen as part of the divinely ordained social structure. This might be well explicated in the prophetic book of Amos when the rich would portray an understanding that they are rich because God has blessed them. Paradoxically, they were rich because they were trampling upon the heads of the poor. This scenario might be obtaining within the AFM church. Discussions have revealed that there is a growing inequality concerning the socio-economic standing of the clergy and of the ordinary members of the church. Members are being told to receive their blessings in Jesus' name, but surprisingly, when the

²¹ Int. Sheila Utedzi, Bindura, 5.6.2016.

clergy wants to mobilize funds, they would circulate a begging bowl. Henceforth, one would begin to question whether it is not possible for the clergy to prophesy money into their own pockets. This gives an impression of hypnosis in its truest sense. Therefore, the next section will discuss the inspiration that can be drawn from Karl Marx, an ardent critic of religion.

Karl Marx and his Undying Voice

Karl Marx argued that religion is the opium of the people.²² This was promulgated by the way the bourgeoisie during Marx's time co-opted religion to maintain the status quo. As a result, the poor people were eulogizing their suffering. That is why being poor was unwittingly being interpreted as being righteous. Such a position would be a flagrant abuse of the laity by the clergy. Surprisingly, the lay people might not see the damage that is being done to them. However, one participant expressed discontent in the way the prosperity gospel has thus far been taken. He said,

You hear pastors saying, I am prophesying money in your pocket, but when they want money for their upkeep and the day to day running of the church, they ask members to give offerings. This leaves one to question why they are not able to perform miracles for themselves. Who knows? Perhaps this is what is echoed in the Shona proverb, N'anga haizvirapi (A healer does not cure himself).²³

Such a statement reflects on how the lay people in the church have been preyed upon by their leaders. Therefore, it has been suggested that one of the most respectable Christian brands, the Apostolic Faith Mission, has been marred by reports of schism, corruption and litigation. This would therefore be an impediment to development.

²² Int. Marufu Joanna, Bindura, 5.6.2016.

²³ Int. Makutuya Shamiso, Harare, 26.5.2016.

Women Empowerment: A Mirage

Inasmuch as it has been argued that AFM has attempted to empower women, critics still want to ask the extent to which women have been empowered. Currently, in the Apostolic Faith Mission, there are few female pastors, as more than 90% of the pastors are male. Although women are given the opportunity to have autonomous groups, the leaders of these groups would be usually wives of the pastors. Henceforth, there has been growing concern in the way women issues are being articulated. There are fears that such women leaders are also protecting the interests of their husbands. One interviewee retorted that, “Female leaders are women with white masks. It saddens me to see that most of the problems of women are caused by their fellows.” It is against this backdrop that some women have unwittingly become gatekeepers of patriarchy. In this regard, there is a truism in Chitando’s postulation that the church in Africa remains a bastion of male and patriarchal privileges. This emanates from the fact that within AFM women seem to enjoy autonomy on paper but practically their independence remains a forlorn ideal.

Education and Underdevelopment in Zimbabwe

Despite the efforts by the AFM church to improve the education system in Zimbabwe, the church’s education provision has been a cause for concern. There have been some condescending voices concerning the way in which AFM has expressed a theology of continuity with missionary education. Although there is a possibility that there were missionaries who were true in their efforts to educate Africans, the reality is that many a times education was used as a tool to colonize the Africans. This explains why only a few Africans were privileged to enroll in missionary schools. Charles Mungoshi in one of his novels, *Waiting for the Rain*, portrays such a character as Lucifer who was assisted by the missionaries in their quest to establish elitism. Lucifer begins to alienate himself from his family members and the rest of the community. He thinks that it was

a biological accident that he was born an African and wishes if he was born somewhere else with some other parents.²⁴

Apart from promoting elitism, the church's quest for education provision has attracted criticism, as it is not tantamount to the land acquired. The argument here is that when the AFM church was erecting schools it took up the land that was previously used by the locals as they embarked on various economic activities. It follows that their production was disturbed by the inauguration of schools. Unfortunately, most of the locals can no longer afford to send their children to these schools. It therefore becomes disheartening that despite the indigenous people losing their land they cannot be active participants in a project engaged through the use of resources they previously owned. This leaves one to question the extent to which the Apostolic Faith Mission, through the provision of education, has contributed towards development. The general feeling would therefore be that development has gone in the opposite direction, which can be called underdevelopment.

Additionally, the pace at which AFM has been involved in education provision needs to undergo further interrogation. Findings have revealed that what the AFM has achieved in education cannot amount to half of what it should have. One interviewee complained, "Considering the fact that the AFM has been operational in Zimbabwe for more than a century it should have been on the vanguard in education provision. Surprisingly, some of the younger Pentecostal churches have surpassed it."²⁵ This is a truism cognizant that not only the AFM but also other Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe have been slow, weak and passive in education.

²⁴ Charles Mungoshi in one of his novels, *Waiting for the Rain*, London: Heinemann, 1975.

²⁵ Int. Reason Katsande, Bindura, 5.6.2016.

Comparatively, Pentecostalism in Malawi is argued to have made protracted efforts in education provision.²⁶

Complexities and Challenges for True Development

One of the major challenges of the church towards the quest to attain development is the lack of needs assessment. The church should have taken time to understand the needs of its members as they come to church. The cause of poverty should have been clearly articulated and poverty should not have been spiritualized. In my thinking, landlessness is the major cause of poverty amongst most Zimbabweans. It syllogistically follows that the church should allocate land to its poor congregants so that they at least have access to the means of production. Some critics might want to say that land that is idle has no high market value. Such arguments are blind to the fact that development does not take place in a vacuum hence land is the incubator.

Concluding Observations

The study has observed that there have been some efforts by the AFM church in a bid to contribute towards development. These efforts have been evident in areas like health, education, community development and women empowerment. However, the role that the church can play towards the attainment of development is minimal. Despite some of the efforts that have been made, they have also unwittingly contributed towards underdevelopment. Lack of freedom by individuals to have

²⁶ Int. Justice Nechikwira. Harare, 26.5.2016. – Here the speaker possibly mixes Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, as the Apostolic Faith Mission in Malawi has not done much for education either (Ulf Strohhahn, *Pentecostalism in Malawi. A History of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2005).

access, control, ownership and utilization of resources has contributed to this underdevelopment.

Chapter 12

The Role of Pentecostal Churches in Early Childhood Education: The Case of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Botswana

Fidelis Nkomazana

Introduction

The chapter examines the role played by AFM in the development of early childhood care and education in Botswana. It observes that the church has played and continues to play a significant role in the development of educational programmes that have benefited the community, especially the children. The school is located at Block 7, in Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana. While block 7 is a middle-income community, the school draws its children from areas such as Ledumang, Mogoditshane, which are low-income communities. On average children enrolled at the school are, therefore, mainly from low- and middle-income families. The challenge for the school is to provide quality programmes at reasonable fees that will contribute to easy access to education for children from low-income backgrounds. The AFM English Medium Day Care, a civil society sector effort, came in to respond to this challenge. The challenge in the development of pre-primary education has been clearly outlined by Tapologo Maundeni, who says that the “enabling environment” is created for private players, communities and non-governmental organizations so that they may lead the provision of

ECCE.¹ This position, however, raises a number of questions, one of which is: what capacity and capability do these players have to provide for ECCE so that it plays a significant role in improving access to ECCE and addressing rural–urban disparities. Private players do not establish their “businesses” with social goals high on their list of priorities. Instead, they are concerned with generating profit. Where they choose to locate their centers is a function of business opportunities, supply and demand. Given the high fees they charge they are not accessible to many children from poor and low-income backgrounds.”²

The profit margins of the school are therefore very small when compared with other private pre-schools in the country. The AFM, therefore, sees the need for the provision of quality early childhood education, not only as a right for every child, but also sees it as an economic investment to the nation’s future. The church, as its policy on education stands, argues for social justice and equality in the provision of education to the children of Botswana. This means providing education at a reasonable cost, while maintaining high quality educational standards.³ Maundeni has observed that there is a great need for ECCE in Botswana, and pointed out that only 7% of eligible children have access to such programmes. She says that this is compounded by the fact that for years the government had left the responsibility of ECCE largely in the hands of private and civil society sectors.⁴ Maunganidze and Tsamaase also lamented on the meagre budget of the Botswana government is putting on pre-primary and

¹ Tapologo Maundeni, “Early Childhood Care and Education in Botswana: A Necessity that is Accessible to Few Children,” *Creative Education*, vol. 4, no. 7A1, 2013.

² Ibid, p. 54.

³ Ibid, pp. 54-59. The article argues that ECCE is a necessity that is not available for a large number of children in Botswana.

⁴ Ibid, p. 54.

primary education, which contributes towards limiting access to the programmes.⁵ Maundeni further outlines the reasons for little attention to pre-school education in Botswana as resulting from the Government's decision to play an indirect role in ECCE. The results are: shortage of funds, the belief that caring for young children is a mother's job and the failure for planners to provide a strong economic justification for investment in ECCE.⁶ The overall responsibility for the education of the nation, including the children, lies with the state, which must protect the right of the citizens to education. The state must ensure that teachers are adequately trained and have the ability to teach and to protect the health of the pupils. It is the government's responsibility to come up with a principle of subsidiarity to discourage any kind of school monopoly and charging exorbitant fees.

The Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The overall purpose of the study is to examine the role-played by the AFM Day Care Centre or preschool in the development of a quality and relevant early childhood education programmes. To fulfill this aim, the following are the objectives:

- a) To critically evaluate the main components of the curriculum taught by this AFM owned and run preschool.
- b) To identify and examine the levels of training of teachers, caretakers and management of the preschool.

⁵ L. Maunganidze and M. Tsamaase, "Early Childhood Education in Botswana: A Case of Fragmented 'Fits,'" *International Education Studies*, vol. 7, no. 5, 2014, p. 2.

⁶ Topologo Maundeni, "Early Childhood Care and Education in Botswana: A Necessity that Is Accessible to Few Children," *Creative Education*, vol. 4, no. 7A1, 2013, p. 56.

- c) To examine the suitability of the physical infrastructure to the age level of learners and the quality of education the preschool desires to provide.
- d) To reaffirm early childhood care and education as a right of all children as the basis for development
- f) To evaluate the implementation of the policy guidelines and assess the compliance of the AFM with the registration and licensing policy.
- e) To identify constraints and challenges faced by the preschool toward equitable expansion of access to quality early childhood care and education services as well as problems faced in the implementation of the ECCE policy.

Research Methods

The study embraced qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. The qualitative methods were concerned with the parents, teachers, the children themselves, the school board and the leaders of the AFM church that was responsible to establishing, financing the project and providing overall leadership of the school. This involved interviews, observation and content analysis of statements and information collected during the data collection stage. Desk review of the 2001 ECCE policy, and how the relevance of the AFM Day Care Centre to the policy will be carried out and examined by the researcher. In-depth understanding of all opportunities and challenges faced in implementing the policy will also be carried out. The challenges pertaining to the standards and quality of ECCE programmes will be investigated, and measures adopted to resolve the issues evaluated.

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

To set the chapter into perspective I looked at some key theories on child development, such as those by Jean Piaget and Jean Jacques Rousseau,

which focus on learning through discovery and play.⁷ The argument is that teachers can help children to achieve their potential through the theory of discovery and play, which are presented as systematic processes of learning. Rousseau, for instance, recommends that teachers should explore the individual interests of the children in order to make sure that each child obtains the information most essential to his personal and individual development. Some theories present play as the first way children learn to make sense of the world at a young age. They point out that children learn as they watch adults interact around them; from their facial expression and tone of their voices. By exploring different roles, they learn how to communicate and work with others. These approaches give children the freedom to learn and these basics guarantee success throughout their schooling and life in general. Piaget's theory allows teachers to view children as individual learners who add value to learning and build understanding for themselves.⁸ The role of the teacher is therefore seen as that of providing experience-based education opportunities; enhancing the children's individual qualities and attitudes; to nourish and support learners' curiosity and involve learners' emotions and create a learning environment in which the children feel safe.⁹

Howard Summers has provided a general conceptual/theoretical framework on early childhood learning and education that observes the fact that children before the age of five are in the stage of concrete operational thought.¹⁰ What this means is that abstract thoughts are a challenge at

⁷ Jean Piaget, *Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood*, London: Heinemann, 1945.

⁸ Kenneth Henson, "Foundations for Learner-centered Education: A Knowledge Base," *Education*, 1124(1), 2003, pp. 5-16

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Howard Summers, *Teachers Guide: Religious and Moral Education for Everyone*, Gaborone: Macmillan, 2004.

this stage. Teachers of children of this age need to exercise sensitivity to the emotions of children and their level of understanding. The focus is to impart skills and knowledge with the objective of developing children, who will grow up to be kind and compassionate.¹¹ Geoffrey Chapman emphasizing the importance or need of starting with the concrete, then move to the abstract, argues that early childhood learning and education should focus on the life experiences of the children.¹² The programme at this stage should be designed in such a way that learning and education should be built around life, using as a starting point their life experience to discover the meaning of their experiences. Chapman points to the fact that the basic principle of early childhood education is to proceed from the known to the unknown.¹³ What it means is that children should start with their own experience and the experiences of people around them. They are to develop within the context of their times, place and circumstances. This involves children, in their own learning, developing skills such as dialogue, through group work and play, which are essential parts of learning. This helps children to become more confident of their own identity and uniqueness. As they learn to share with others, they can grow in sensitivity and openness to others. The approach of the AFM Day Care teachers is in line with that which Chapman proposes is as follows:¹⁴

1. Exploring the experiences of children's lives to broaden their understanding, learning and interpretation.
2. The role of the teacher is to create a good learning environment in order to help children to learn. This is so because children will always remember much better what they themselves have expressed shared and

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Geoffrey Chapman, *Developing in Christ. One, & Two*, London: Cassell 1984.

¹³ Ibid, pp. 7-8.

¹⁴ Ibid.

discovered and not what the teacher has merely told them. This develops their confidence, create more dialogue and improve communication. Focusing on what they love-doing leads to children's deeper meaning of life.

3. The teacher should consider the needs of the group, appreciating their contribution, value and differences. Chapman compares the relationship between the teacher and the pupils to a three-legged stool, which if any of its elements are removed, the whole thing collapses. He writes:

These three elements, vital to the learning process are: 1) The possibility of personal growth; 2) the attainment of the aim or goal of the learning activity; and 3) the building up of unity and trust within the group through acceptance, sharing, dialogue, awareness, caring. Such learning speaks not only to the head but also to the heart; communication is "communing."¹⁵

All these were influenced by Piaget's works, which transformed education and led to more "child-centered approach. Therefore, he insists, "Education means making creators," "inventors," "innovators" and "not conformists."¹⁶ Piaget's theory of cognitive development, therefore, insists interaction through a variety of learning activities and techniques, through which children gain skills of co-operation, leadership, unity, and sensitivity to the needs of others. For this to happen, Geoffrey Chapman says that the teacher is expected to carry out the following tasks:¹⁷

1. Initiate learning by providing materials and giving clear directions for procedure.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 13.

¹⁶ J.C. Bruguier, *Conversations with Jean Piaget*, B.M. Gulati (trans.), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977, p. 132.

¹⁷ Geoffrey Chapman, *Developing in Christ, One & Two*, London: Cassell, 1984, pp. 14-15.

2. Ask relevant questions; list the contributions of the children on the board or a platform where children will appreciate.
3. Supply information and facts by sharing relevant experience and displaying posters that will provoke the children to think and participate.
4. Co-ordinate ideas, select appropriate songs, pictures that will capture the children's attention and interests.
5. Maintain and strengthen children's spirit through encouragement by being friendly, warm and affirming their contributions. The process, inviting participation of everyone, including shy and reserved ones; listening attentively and respecting their ideas and helping them to further elaborate their answers and comments; mediating, harmonizing, conciliating differences between points of view and enforcing discipline and order and relieving tension to avoid frustration, stress, domination, excessively competitive behaviour.

Historical Background and Development of the Early Childhood Education in Botswana

While the role of the church in the provision of primary, secondary and higher education is evident, the participation of the church in early childhood care and education has been minimal in Botswana. The study has chosen to examine the contribution of the AFM Gaborone assembly, a Pentecostal church, in the provision of early childhood education to show that the church has woken up to take the challenge. The development of early childhood care and education in Botswana took place in three major stages: the pre-colonial stage, the missionary stage and the present-day stage, which covers the period of my discussion.

The Pre-colonial Period

The early childhood education dates back to the pre-colonial times. It was through informal and formal education that parents and elders of the community taught children. The first formal and informal instructions

presented to children were to do with proper behaviour, respect and submission to authority in general. These values were not only an expectation, but obligatory for all the children in each society. The broad terminology underlying these fundamental values and moral standards can be summarized by the word *botho* (*Ubuntu/Bunu*).¹⁸ It was upon the concept of *botho* that the life and aspirations of the community rested. It is on the premises of this understanding that the Botswana National Vision 2016 has challenged the nation to revive the concept of *botho* and incorporate it into the education system, the economic and social systems as well as other developmental projects and programmes. Discussing the pillar with the heading “Building a Moral and Tolerant Society,” the National Vision 2016 points out that:

We must build both into a national principle. *Botho* must be central to education, to home and community life, to the workplace, and to national policy. Religious organizations must be assisted to play a full part in imparting a sound moral and human rights education in schools, and in the community.

Botho remained the central theme of the traditional education curriculum with religion functioning as a school subject based upon oral instruction.¹⁹ It must be noted therefore that the pre-colonial education largely aimed at strengthening the norms and values of the society, which were religious in nature and practice. This type of education made specific emphasis on character formation. Early childhood education as presented by the AFM today is expected to achieve the same goals.

¹⁸ Part Themba Mgadla, *Missionaries and Western Education in the Bechuanaland Protectorate 1859-1904: The Case of the Bangwato*, 1989, p. 1.

¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 1-6, 47; Fidelis Nkomazana and F. Phadi, *Religious and Moral Education for Everyone. Standard Learner's Book*, Gaborone: Macmillan, 2006, p. 26-49; William Charles Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, London: SCM, 1928, pp. 1, 10.

From the Missionary Period to the Early 1980s

The pre-colonial education was in the mid-1950s weakened and/or in some cases replaced by the missionary form of education.²⁰ The aim of the missionary education was closely associated with the missionary objectives, which aimed at propagating Christianity in order to convert Batswana to Christianity. From the onset missionaries held biased attitudes and values towards the local people, especially those who did not embrace their religion. They considered their own European cultural values to be superior to those of the indigenous people. It was for this reason that they regarded the educational systems of Batswana as heathenish, barbaric and backward. Quoting A.J. Dachs, Mgadla, for instance, observes that:

In the Christian Faith Mackenzie saw a means to God so that his entire life was transformed. The heathen was to be converted in his beliefs and customs, industry was to be encouraged, education fostered, and a new society created and western civilization established. Change was to be profound, but it was also to be peaceful and beneficial to the eyes of the Victorian Englishmen confident in their industrial and commercial wealth and their technological supremacy.²¹

Bible reading, evangelization and the training of school teachers and evangelists was the main purpose for educating Batswana. Missionaries, therefore, saw religion as the pillar for their education system. Extracts for reading and writing lessons, teaching on morality and other subjects were drawn from the Bible. Missionaries came with this approach to kill two birds with one stone.²²

²⁰ Part Themba Mgadla, *A History of Education in Bechuanaland Protectorate to 1965*, New York: University Press of America, 2004.

²¹ Part Themba Mgadla, *Missionaries and Western Education in the Bechuanaland Protectorate 1859-1904: The Case of the Bangwato*, 1989, p. 80.

²² *Ibid*, pp. 4-51, 109, 192.

The purpose of both the traditional and missionary education was, therefore, to develop the whole life of an individual. It also equipped learners to contribute to society. The traditional forms of education saw tolerance and compassion, which are also emphasized by the Botswana policies of Education and the Vision 2016 as crucial components of education.²³ This is an important factor that the AFM early childhood education tries to infuse into its curriculum, through which they want to develop a programme that is life oriented, emphasizing fundamental values of *botho*, such as respect, unity, co-operation, self-reliance, tolerance.

Results, Discussions and Analysis

The Government of Botswana through its local government structures monitors early childhood care and education to maintain standards. These objectives were developed to address the criteria for accreditation as stipulated by the Early Childhood Care and Education Policy of 2001, which focuses on the curriculum, staff qualifications and development, physical environment, health and food service, administration and staffing patterns and programme evaluation.

The Policy Implementation

In recent years, there has been a push for government policy to address the early years of children as a key component of public education. From the time of independence in 1966, early childhood institutions have been developing, but with no standards set for uniform, quality care and education services. The National Policy on Early Childhood Education was first adopted in 1981.²⁴ The Government Commission Report of

²³ Ibid, pp. 22-26, 57-73.

²⁴ Tapologo Maunganidze and Marea Tsamaase, "Early Childhood Education in Botswana: A Case of Fragmented 'Fits,'" *International Education Studies*, vol. 7, no. 5, 2014, p. 2.

1994 recommended that there should be an appropriate institutional framework to meet the basic learning needs of children. A comprehensive attention was to be paid on early childhood education, which would provide early childhood care and education for low-income families was to be given priority. In response to the 1994, Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE),²⁵ and the Vision 2016,²⁶ Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy was to be developed. In 2001, the Ministry of Education produced a comprehensive policy in line with the implementation of the RNPE recommendations and fulfilment of 2016.²⁷ The AFM pre-school has been working to implement these policies, whose objective, Bose outlines as follows:

1. To establish pre-school structures to accredit and maintain quality of ECCE.
2. To encourage the participation of women in social and economic activities
3. To formulate regulatory and quality standards for operation.

While the Pre-Primary Education Unit of the Ministry of Education was responsible for ECCE policy formulation and implementation, the Ministry of Local Government was responsible for registration, inspection, supervision and monitoring, of standards facilities and the quality of the ECCE.²⁸ The responsibility for training of the ECCE personnel were left with various colleges of education in Botswana. They were expected to train teachers for pre-primary level. The Lobatse Day Care

²⁵ Republic of Botswana, 1994.

²⁶ Republic of Botswana, 1997.

²⁷ Kabita Bose, "Early Childhood Care and Education Programs in Botswana: Policy (2001) Implementation," *Asia – Pacific Journal Research in Early Childhood Education*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2008, pp. 83-98.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 86.

Training Centre was specifically given the responsibility of Baby Care and Day Care and Nursery Centres. This policy went through government consultation, and structures were fully adopted in 2004. Institutions that met the basic requirements were licensed to run the services and continue to be monitored on regular basis. These centres were expected to cater for children from 2.5 years to 6-year olds.

Given the objectives stated above, centres were to adhere to standards and regulations laid down in the 2001 policy document. The regulations and standard were:

1. To procure licenses by registering the pre-schools
2. To achieve high standards in providing appropriate buildings and physical infrastructure essential for running ECCE centres through regular supervision.
3. To develop or acquire a standard curriculum, provide trained teachers and offer affordable fees structure
4. To train teachers and engage well trained personnel in formal training schools for this level of education.
5. To adhere to the fees structure of the ECCE centres – consistent and affordable.²⁹

It was partly this policy that provoked private organizations and civic society, like AFM to invest on early childhood care and education. The policy of the church is to provide holistic early childhood care and education, which puts strong emphasis on developing the whole child, attending to his or her social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs, to establish a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and well-being.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 88; Tapologo Maundeni and Marea Tsamaase, *Creative Education* vol. 7, no. 5, 2014, p. 54.

The policy of the church on early childhood care and education is therefore, to equip and train children in godly manner, develop them spiritually, physically, socially and mentally. Policies are built around children, who would be responsible and be able to develop in their environment and upright in Christian values, which they will reflect in school, at home and in the community. In its policy statement, the AFM providing education to all children at an achievable cost to ensure that every child has an opportunity regardless of their background. A strong combination of academic and spiritual growth is seen to be the core of their dream going forward. The church (AFM Gaborone) also hopes that other AFM congregations in the country and other Christian churches will be inspired to establish similar projects as outlined and guided by the 2001 policy.

The Development of Physical Infrastructure and Other Facilities

The 2001 policy demanded that centres achieve high standards in providing appropriate buildings and other physical infrastructure as a requirement for ECCE. The AFM chose to play a role in education through establishing a relevant early childhood care and education programme by implementing this point of the policy. The idea of introducing early childhood care and education was conceived in 2000 by the church board of the AFM, in Gaborone and was implemented after a period of planning, including the recruitment of the founding school manager, teachers and refurbishing of the Sunday school classrooms to suit the Gaborone City Council conditions for running the early childhood care and education. In 2012 the church took a bold step forward by sourcing a bank loan totaling P2.5 million from Bank Gaborone to construct a new school with the necessary modern facilities suitable for the preschool educational centre catering for 2-6-year olds in a secure and stimulating learning environment. The building project located at a secure and peaceful AFM

Block 7 church compound was completed in 2015 with the following facilities: 6 classrooms, a school mini-bus, recreational facilities (playground and swings), sanitation and suitably designed toilets and sports facilities, such as a playground with swings, administration office for the school manager and finance officer. It also has a sickbay and a fully equipped kitchen, dining hall, suitable furniture and chairs for the 2-6 children old in all the classrooms. Each classroom also has enough floor space covered with mat to allow children to spread their toys and learning equipment. These facilities are designed to foster a love of exploration and learning for the children of 2-6 years old. It offers a quality educational programme that is suitable for ECCE.

Teaching and Administrative Staff and 2016/2017 Enrolments

The provision of appropriate programmes is dependent on the personnel that stimulates and drive them to enjoy learning and participating. The availability of trained staff and caregivers is therefore essential for the success of the ECCE programmes. At the AFM Day Care Centre qualified educators, who are passionate about each child's individual development, care for children. They strive to ensure that each child's individuality is nurtured and their ambitions and achievements celebrated. The school has a staffing of eight highly qualified and passionate teachers holding certificates, and diplomas in early childhood education; a qualified driver and transport officer holding a class B and PSV license; a domestic officer responsible for providing fresh healthy meals for children and cleaning of the kitchen facilities; a general caretaker responsible for the children's security and protection and also assisting with cleaning, the school grounds. The church security personnel and guards in providing general protection service to the school assist the caretaker. One of the teachers is a qualified information Technology officer, who will in future assist with establishing a computer system for the school and to

facilitate easy learning for the children. The other assistant teacher is also a qualified accounts person responsible for helping with finances, banking and payments and salaries for the staff. This officer assists the school manager with general administration and management duties of the school. This increased staffing of a complement of 11 includes the transport officer, kitchen assistant and a general caretaker, who is responsible for children's safety.³⁰

The enrolments are limited to the ages from 2 to 6 years as prescribed by the 2001 policy that was adopted in 2004. At 6 years, a child is expected to graduate from the ECCE programme and join the primary school educational programme. The report of January 2016 of the School Board to the Church Board noted the following enrolment figures for the year 2016:

Class	Numbers
Baby class (2 years)	24
Nursery (3 years +)	17
Kindergarten (4-5 years)	15
Reception (5-6 years)	14
Total	70

The 2017 enrolment increased to a total number of 125 (25 in Baby class, 35 in nursery class, 37 in Kindergarten class and 24 in Reception class) kids against the 173 recommended as the allowable maximum figure by

³⁰ AFM Day Care Centre Parents-Teacher Association meeting minutes 17.11.2017 prepared by Masego Samson, the School manager; also see the AFM Day Care Centre Report, dated January 2017, presented to the Church Board by the School Board.

the Council Compliance and Quality Assurance License and Inspection Report of 5th January 2017. This inspection report found the school to be in satisfactory state of hygiene and repair and to be in compliance with Public Health and Building Control Act Requirements. The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meeting minutes of 17 January 2016 also shows that the school is gaining a huge interest and parents continue to visit the school and expressing interest to enroll their children at the school. The PTA meetings are the highlight of every year, because it is here that the teachers are officially introduced to parents and where the teachers and parents talk about the welfare of the kids and share ideas as how to best raise the kids to be a generation of future leaders. The PTA also discusses a wide range of issues affecting the development of the school such as staffing, training of teachers, the physical developments of the school infrastructure, the school calendar and other facilities such as the need for the school to have its own swimming pool.³¹

The School Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education

The provision of quality programmes to enhance learning is priority for ECCE. It must be noted that the driving force behind any early childhood care and education programme is curriculum. It is together with the motivation of staff, an integral part of the engine, which provides the momentum that makes the programme relevant and meaningful. The church, as already shown in its policy finds it important to teach Christian education to children at an early age in addition to reading, numeracy and writing. Daily Bible lessons that are taught through memory verses, songs, every day prayers and Bible stories to inculcate moral uprightness

³¹ AFM Day Care Centre Parents–Teacher Association meeting minutes, 17.11.2017 prepared by Masego Samson, the School manager; also see the AFM Day Care Centre Report, dated January 2017, presented to the Church Board by the School Board.

and training of children to understand the importance of Christian values and for good character formation. The quality of a programme is greatly influenced by the quality of its curriculum.³²

The languages used in teaching the curriculum are vernacular (Setswana) and English. English is given prominence and hence is the most commonly used language. In places where Setswana is not the majority vernacular language, teachers would in future be encouraged to use the mother tongue of the children side by side with English where possible.

The AFM preschool curriculum describes the program's goals and activities, and provides the basic and entire set of lessons that children are learning and the content taught during a preschool education in any given year. In this, the children explore a wide variety of academic, social, physical, and emotional lessons. In addition to academics and social skills, the children work on critical speech and motor skills, that is, they start to learn to speak in full sentences, use a pair of scissors, kick a ball or generally to improve coordination.

The curriculum is Christian based but harmonizes the Christian principles with the three R's - writing, reading and arithmetic. English and Setswana were the major media of communication. The use of vernacular is critically important, since it is the means of contextualizing education, an indication that learning should always be developed within a given context, which is an important factor in the overall development of early childhood and care education in Botswana.

As already shown above, AFM pre-school consists of baby, nursery, kindergarten and reception classes, located in a Pentecostal religious institution, hence includes religious education in their curriculum. It also uses specific materials and activities to encourage children in hands-on

³² The AFM policy is based on Proverbs 22:6 that says "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

learning. Teachers do vary their educational approaches to suit the needs of individual children in their various above-mentioned classes. They are intended to prepare students for primary education and work on skill areas, such as the following:

1. Identifying and writing letters and numbers
2. Shapes, cutting, sorting objects, drawing and gluing
3. Colours and colouring
4. Sharing, cooperation and taking turns
5. Transitioning from one activity to another
6. Calendar (the days, weeks, months, years and seasons, etc.)
7. Physical activities, such as running, jumping, skipping, hopping on one foot, using playground equipment and balls, etc.

To implement the curriculum each teacher has a set of goals and a philosophy to adhere to. While teachers follow general guidelines in an informal way, they complete lesson plans and some form of rubrics for assessing children's progress.

The AFM Day Care Centre curriculum also takes into account the length of the preschool day. The younger children in the baby and nursery classes, practically run for only a few hours a day, that is, from 7am to 11am, while the older children run for much longer hours. In the afternoon, the curriculum includes, resting, and each child has a mattress and a blanket. They are given time to sleep for an hour or so, while on other days, children go for swimming, playing games etc. to cover all the parent's work hours.

During any given day, preschoolers, therefore, are likely to take part in:

1. Specific activities such as circle time, song time, calendar time, active play time, story time, craft time, etc.

2. Transitional periods that exist between activities (learning how to walk in a line with peers, learning how to clean up toys and supplies, etc.)
3. Special activities such as art time, music time, reading time and physical education time.
4. A preschool curriculum at times include homework given to the child to reinforce what was learned in the preschool classroom, such as counting from 1 to 20 for their parents.
5. Field trips are also designed to enhance a lesson -- for example a trip to the museum for children to admire art or to a library to learn how to borrow a book.
6. Special guest speakers who are brought in to provide more details to a lesson - a police officer to talk about safety, or a dentist to talk about the importance of brushing teeth every day.

The curriculum emphasizes the importance of play and discovery because children find a lot of fun in learning that way. Play and discovery, therefore, involves interacting with other children, and teaching young children how to form friendships, take turns, learn how to cooperate, trying out different ways of problem solving, using their imaginations and thinking creatively.

The use of these different types of structured and unstructured play, allow children to practice different skills in different ways and modalities, and all these require a nurturing environment. What is evident is that children's care and education needs are intertwined. Poor care, health, nutrition and physical and emotional security can affect educational potentials in the form of mental retardation, impaired cognitive and behaviour capabilities, motor development and delay, depression difficulties with concentration and attention. Each health and nutrition intervention such as school feeding, have been shown to directly increase pre-school attendance and performance.

Kabita Bose states that ECCE encourages a holistic view of the needs of the children, as they grow old and mature.³³ He also points out that it includes a safe and loving environment that fulfills the basic requirements of health, nutrition, sanitation and complex levels of thinking, movements, feeling and interaction.³⁴ Bose further observes that the ECCE programmes should not only be seen as a place of care, but also as an environment that enhances children's cognitive and social skills. She points out that it bridges the gap between home and school, prepares the children to be ready for the future and to perform better in later years. As was emphasized on the section on the theoretical framework, she also stresses the point that participation sharpens and develops children's social and literacy skills and thinking abilities. It also provides a safe learning environment for children of working and studying parents.³⁵

Economic Benefits of Early Childhood Care and Education

The AFM project provides evidence that early childhood care and education can produce economic returns to the church, the community and the nation. Some of the benefits are:

1. Early childcare and education enables the mother, especially single mothers, to work and support the family. At the last Parent – Teacher Association (PTA) meeting the parents expressed their deep appreciation to the school for providing the day care service, that, they

³³ Kabita Bose, "Early Childhood Care and Education Programs in Botswana: Policy (2001) Implementation," *Asia – Pacific Journal Research in Early Childhood Education*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2008, pp. 83-98.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

pointed out, did not only add value to their children but also gives them an opportunity to work and raise an income for the family.³⁶

2. Day care education supports the child's development that increases subsequent school success, labour force productivity, pro-social behaviour and health. At the 2016 graduation ceremony of the pre-school the manager of the school indicated that our graduates were being easily absorbed into English medium schools without any difficulty and that their performance was said to be very good.³⁷
3. It also positively contributes towards the creation of employment as the report of the School Board shows; the school has 11 full-time employees under its employment. In addition to this primary employment created by the school, there is also other secondary beneficiaries, such as the various companies that are periodically engaged to do maintenance works, companies that are annually engaged to audit the finances and accounts of the school; the banks, food stores, people providing swimming facilities for the school, those that are providing the school with uniforms, and other service providers.
4. The pre-school is also a source of spiritual development for the children, who in addition to learning reading, writing and arithmetic, are also introduced to Christian scriptures, prayers and fellowship. This goes a long way to establishing a very good foundation for the children, imparting important values and ethical principles that are essential in building society.

³⁶ AFM Day Care Centre Parents – Teacher Association meeting Minutes, 17.11.2017 prepared by Masego Samson, the School manager; also see the AFM Day Care Centre Report, January 2017, presented to the Church Board by the School Board.

³⁷ Address by the school manager (Masego Samson), November 2016 Graduation Ceremony of the AFM Day Care Centre.

5. The benefits from enhanced child development are the largest part of the economic return that should continue to affect important considerations in policy and programme design. Policy-makers and programme designers will find the role the school played provided bench making lessons that will go a long way to benefit early childhood care and education in the country.
6. The economic consequences include reduction in public and private expenditures associated with school failure, crime or health problems. The benefit of bringing these children under an environment where they can be able to learn and be guided by this process has contributed immensely to cutting down the number of street children and other social ills.

Challenges and Conclusion

In conclusion, therefore, it must be pointed out that the study set out to examine the role of the AFM in the provision of early childhood care and education. The policy of the school was to produce a total person – spiritually, physically, socially and mentally. The study has demonstrated that the school has worked hard to meet the requirements for establishing and running early childhood care and education and works tirelessly to improve its performance in achieving these objectives. The study however found that the AFM preschool programme encountered some challenges:

1. Most children from low-income families still do not have access to good quality programmes. They are still disadvantaged. The school is proposing that other Pentecostal churches should be emulating the pre-school and establishing centres at reasonable fees to allow children from low-income families to have access to early childhood care and education.
2. There is also limited access for children with disability. The AFM Day Care Centre has so far done very little to address this group of children.

The school will need specialized teachers to venture into this group of learners,

3. The other major challenge facing the school is inadequate facilities (swimming pools). The school with the assistance of the parents, is doing all it can to further improve the learning landscape of the children.
4. The promotion of exchange of good practices with similar institutions in the country needs to be done and seen as a matter of urgency.

Finally, it should be observed that the involvement of Pentecostal churches as represented by AFM shows that there is an increased participation in childhood care and education provision in Botswana.

Chapter 13

Politics and Development in Zimbabwe: Political Voices from the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM)

Nomatter Sande and B. Denga

Introduction

Issues surrounding development in Zimbabwe, across Southern Africa and beyond, are calling for a concerted effort from all stakeholders. The nexus of church, politics and development, are intertwined, premised on both the religious and biblical narratives. Nevertheless, it seems familiar that Pentecostalism prefers a parallel approach to developmental issues, especially on matters that involve civil engagement. For instance, currently in Zimbabwe, the government (the liberation regime) is blamed for destroying the economy, and responsible for poor politics. As such, Kristof argues that Mugabe destroyed Zimbabwe from a good Rhodesia.¹ As a result, Zimbabwe has gone downhill and for the past decades, education, health and industry are in tatters. On the other hand, Pentecostal churches are regarded as profoundly spiritual, and torch bearers in the society. It is not evident enough how the Pentecostal churches are enhancing development, other than the amassing of wealth of its churches and leadership. Nyamayaro argues that Pentecostals in Zimbabwe are blamed for causing both the political and economic instability,

¹ N. Kristof, "How Mugabe has Destroyed Zimbabwe after Inheriting a Prosperous Country from Rhodesia," *Zimbabwe Today*, 2017.

and the men of the cloth are no longer pursuing God but glory and materialism.² This chapter opposes such actors who use Pentecostalism to meet their ends but seeks to facilitate theological reflections on the ethics of development through the socio-cultural dimension and political peace building. Accordingly, this advocacy for a reasonable connection amongst Pentecostalism, politics and development. For example, Gifford argues that Pentecostal spirituality does not necessarily de-politicize issues but rather the theology of deliverance from demons mystify economic and social issues for believers.³

Subsequently, in this chapter, development is narrowed to center on how pastoral political voices are crucial elements for the socio-cultural dimension of the broader development in Zimbabwe. Thus, the nature of the church prompts a tradition of caring, hospitality, justice and prophetic voice, and merely put the church as a hub of democratization. The gap that this study is filling is finding the place of Pentecostal leaders' political faith that impacts a positive development in Zimbabwe. For instance, the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) is the mother of Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe.⁴ However, how has such stature been translated into meaningful active impact of civil society impact is an area that needs further inquiry. The AFM enjoys membership of most substantial numbers of believers and not only ordinary believers but educated and technocrats. Such personnel are resourceful for strategic development in both socio-cultural and economic growth. The question is whether there is a mechanism in place to translate this potential into meaningful political partic-

² A. Nyamayaro, "False Prophets Misleading Nation," *H-Metro*, 2016.

³ Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, p. 332.

⁴ L. Togarasei, "Historicizing Pentecostal Christianity in Zimbabwe," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 42(1), 2016.

ipation and development. Maxwell is truthful when he states that Pentecostalism is not primarily concerned with formal political change, and its adherence is remote from the political and educated classes and spoils of the state.⁵ Although believers in the AFM are instrumental in development issues in Zimbabwe, both the pastoral voices and Pentecostal theological beliefs should be the first points of inquiry. It is against this backdrop that this chapter seeks to explore the lived experiences and participation of the pastors in the AFM who have openly joined political parties.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

This study utilized the modernization theory as theoretical lenses to understand how the AFM pastors can participate in the political and developmental issues in Zimbabwe. Modernization theory according to Hulme and Turner is concerned with development strategies of economic growth used by prosperous developed countries.⁶ In this work, the modernization point of view showed that ‘participation’ means involvement of the AFM pastors in the motivation and implementation of political strategies with the purpose of increasing the acceptance and efficiency.⁷ However, issues of participation are not new concepts.⁸ It represents a move from the global, spatial, top-down strategies that dominated

⁵ David Maxwell, *African Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecostalism and the Rise of a Zimbabwean Transnational Religious Movement*, Melton, Woodbridge: James Currey, 2006, p. 221.

⁶ D. Hulme and M. Turner, *Sociology and Development: Theories, Policies and Practices*, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990.

⁷ J. Lane, “Non-Governmental Organizations and Participatory Development: The Concept in Theory Versus the Concept in Practice,” in: S. Wright (ed), *Power and Participatory Development*, London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1995.

⁸ M. Buchy, H. Ross and W. Proctor, "Enhancing the Information Base on Participatory Approaches in Australian Natural Resource Management:

early development initiatives to more locally sensitive methodologies as highlighted by Storey.⁹ There are differing opinions as to the origins of participation theory,¹⁰ but it is established from the literature that it comes from both political science and development theory. More so, Lane availed that participation is heavily influenced by theories of development and is therefore highly varied and complicated due to different theoretical positions.¹¹ Thus, in this paper, the modernization theory helped to see whether the AFM can involve itself in the challenges coming from politics while it is apolitical. The study imagines that putting the pastoral, political voices on the front is a better structure to create space in the political arena in Zimbabwe.

Methodologically this study used in-depth interviews, and secondary sources to obtain data. The secondary sources focused on the contributions the AFM pastors who have not joined politics but have a keen interest in political issues, as well as other contemporary pastors who have either spoken or participated on political matters. The in-depth interviews were comprised of the key informants. In this chapter, three key informants were the AFM pastors who are currently involved in the politics of Zimbabwe. These were, Honourable Advocate Pastor Nelson Chamisa, Pastor Tedi Munemo and Pastor Blessing Muroyiwa. The

Commissioned Research under the Land and Water Australia's Social and Institutional Research Program," Canberra: Land and Water Australia, 2000.

⁹ D. Storey, "Issues of Integration, Participation and Empowerment in Rural Development: The Case of Leaders in the Republic of Ireland," *Journal of Rural Studies*, 15, 1999.

¹⁰ J. Midgley, A. Hall, M. Hardiman, D. Narine (eds), *Community Participation, Social Development and the State*, London: Methuen, 1986.

¹¹ J. Lane, "Non-Governmental Organizations and Participatory Development: The Concept in Theory Versus the Concept in Practice," in S. Wright (ed), *Power and Participatory Development*, London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1995.

Honourable Pastor Advocate Nelson Chamisa is the Vice-President of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) who graduated in 2016 with a Diploma in Theological Studies. Pastor Tedi Munemo is an AFM senior Minister of Religion who is the first to come out in the open about his political affiliation to the MDC around 2005. Pastor Blessing Muroyiwa is an upcoming aspiring Member of Parliament Mazowe Central Constituency; a graduate of Living Waters Theological Seminary in 2006. The reason for choosing these key informants was that these pastors are actively involved in the political engagement. As such, this helped to set them as the benchmark to develop further strategies for a meaningful civil participation. The central questions that were asked were to deal with what motivated the pastors to be involved in politics? What were their lived experiences within the political arena? And what are the view of the AFM to their engagement? Also, how can the AFM promote civil participation which influences development in Zimbabwe?

An Overview of the Church and Politics in Zimbabwe

This part conceptualizes the concept of politics as well as paint an overall relationship between the church and state. I subscribe to St Thomas Aquinas' political theory which interweaves ethics and politics. To Aquinas, politics is a healthy element that will see the development of the total human being as well as his happiness. It is this positive mentality that this chapter wants to approach the concept of politics. However, the word politics admittedly is broad; it involves processes of rules that govern how people live. A political system can be designated as those interactions through which values are authoritatively allocated for society. Max Weber further propounded that political association is facilitated by the allowing of threat and force for a given area. In short, therefore, politics is the process of who gets what, when, and how. Politics is regarded as the stepping stone, and the church needs to spread its wings towards

development especially building up a healthy socio-cultural position of the populace for accountable leadership and good governance.

In most African states the history of church and state is broad, and the relations between church and state in Africa go back to the colonial period,¹² and in many parts of Africa, Christianity has always been a factor in Africa's democratic processes.¹³ Also, in Zimbabwe the church has still been challenging the ZANU PF, and this confirms its prophetic role, with the ecumenical agencies in the forefront of political engagement and these include the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Council.¹⁴ Another prominent document is 'The Zimbabwe We Want,' which is the product of heads of Christian denominations (EFZ, ZCBC and ZCC) which criticized the ills that were bedeviling Zimbabwe in the year 2000. Prominent problems addressed in this document were the issues of land, elections, economics, human rights and the constitutional rights. Although this document is valuable, it does not proffer action points for individual denominations within a more prominent fellowship, like how should the AFM efficiently participate in the politics of Zimbabwe. Ruzivo points out the vital areas that different denominations and churches engaged in the political processes.¹⁵ He further explained that

¹² R.H. Randolph, *Dawn in Zimbabwe. The Catholic Church in the New Order: A Report on the Activities of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe for the Five Years 1977-1981*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1985, p. 70.

¹³ M. Ruzivo, *A Mapping of the Church Groups in Zimbabwe: The Role of the Church in the Struggle for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe*, Zimbabwe Institute Publications, 2008, pp. 4-14.

¹⁴ S.M. Bhebe, *Church and State in Zimbabwe. An Evangelical Appraisal*, Gweru: Mambo, 2007, p. 46.

¹⁵ M. Ruzivo, *A Mapping of the Church Groups in Zimbabwe: The Role of the Church in the Struggle for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe*, Zimbabwe Institute Publications, 2008, 4-14.

the main thrust of the church was exercising the moral influence. However, the point of departure in this work is about advocating for the leaders, especially pastors, to be involved in the structures of the politics in Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe it is difficult to separate religion and politics.¹⁶ Since Zimbabwe is about 85 percent Christian, there must, of necessity, be different political persuasions. The negative definition of politics associates it with intrigue, gimmickry and strategy to obtain a position of power or control. Being the case, it is unbelievable to think that if politics and religion fail to mix, then the churches would be compelling. However, some political section is not comfortable for this mixture, and they warn that the church must remain out of politics.¹⁷ There has always been a witch hunting approach between the church and the state in Zimbabwe. And where the church worked with the state, it was a marriage of convenience, but not a lasting relationship. The church has not been consistent in its voice towards politics. Such fragmentation and disunity have made the incumbent leadership to take severe advantage and exploit the citizens of Zimbabwe. According to the ZCC warning about the business of discrediting political parties, the church is not to replace the government, but to help in smooth and good governance.¹⁸ Further, there is need for a correct interpretation of the scriptures, and every Christian must participate in the 2018 elections. Consequently, Murray asserted that it is not hard to generate arguments for why the church may engage in political debate, but it is more important to think about how it might

¹⁶ N. Mangwana, "Religion and Politics are Inseparable," *Herald*, 2015, www.herald.co.zw/religion-and-politics-are-inseparable.

¹⁷ "Keep Churches out of Politics, News Day," 2015, www.newsday.co.zw/2015/11/keep-churches-out-of-politics.

¹⁸ "Whistle Blown on Politically Aligned Churches," *News Day*, 2017. www.newsday.co.zw/2017/05/whistle-blown-politically-aligned-churches.

do so efficiently.¹⁹ Some of the challenges highlighted by Murray were that the church leaders are expected to speak the truth while some politicians are known to alter the facts to suit apparent circumstances.²⁰ Also, church leaders must refrain from the ecclesial forum and authority and engage in public opinions, and this takes a lot of persuasions.

The Lived Experiences of Pastors in Politics

The role and influence of pastors in the church are unfathomable. In fact, religion is a powerful tool, sparking controversial debates in parliament, homes, churches, politics and so forth. Consequently, almost everything revolves around religion, and in turn religion can inform things around us. It is apparent that religion gives different advantages of spirituality, for example, it is easy to advance active citizenship that benefits everyone from the church. In that capacity, civic institutions are essential operators in socio-political processes in a nation. So, the church in Zimbabwe has given meaning, hope and direction to the people of Zimbabwe, intentionally or unintentionally.²¹ The AFM pastors are responsible for equipping the believers to be in control of their destiny, their environment and their after-life. Nevertheless, the believers learn better from what they see than from what they are taught, as the Apostle Paul advised that “*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*”²² For the AFM to change its paradigm about political engagement and development issues, it has to do with what the pastors do and say to them. Aristotle pointed out that the premise that people believe things are based

¹⁹ A. Murray, "What Can the Church Say?" *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Australia*, Strathfield, NSW: St. Paul's, 2005.

²⁰ A. Murray, "Church and Politics – A Catholic Perspective," *Lutheran Theological Journal*, 40/2, 2006, p. 94.

²¹ Ezra Chitando, *Living with Hope*, Geneva: WCC, 2007, p. 1.

²² 1 Corinthians 11:1.

on the character of the person. These are the hard lessons of life. Viewed positively, though, they mean that we believe someone whom we judge to be knowledgeable, virtuous and of good will.²³

It is evident that casualties are found in this approach of putting the men of the cloth on the political forefront. Alexander Dowie once ran for a political seat when he moved to America. He had a strong following and was influential in political circles but this shipwrecked his ministry.²⁴ Perhaps, such impact cannot be underestimated in the Pentecostal heritage, since Alexander Dowie is celebrated as one of the critical forerunners of Pentecostalism. His *Leaves of Healing* magazine even reached South Africa and assisted in the start the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church (CCAC) there and in the development of Pentecostalism in South Africa.²⁵

What many pastors fear is the possibility of winning in the elections and then one become too occupied with the work of politics rather than the church. Muroyiwa said: "I will never be too occupied for God; I am going to parliament to push the church agenda and the voice of the church in the law-making process of Zimbabwe." Similarly, Dr Frank Chikane, the current AFM International President, argued, in defending his position, that the reason he answered the calling to ministry was the enormity of the challenges in South Africa that needed a concentrated effort to preach the gospel amidst the context of conflict.²⁶ It is not clear why this

²³ A. Murray, "What Can the Church Say?" *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Australia*, Strathfield, NSW: St. Paul's Publ., 2005, pp. 69-70.

²⁴ R. Liardon, *God's Generals: Why they Succeeded and why some Failed*, New Kensington: Whitaker House, 2003.

²⁵ A.H. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 106.

²⁶ R. Sider, "Interview with Rev. Frank Chikane," *Transformation*, 5(2), 1988, p. 10.

mentality has not cascaded down to most of the pastors within the AFM family.

What is certain is that some pastors are afraid to lose the elections and the shame that may be associated with it. However, Muroyiwa said that he was willing to continue trying even up to ten times if his age allows him to do so. The balance of political parties within an assembly whereby the pastor would have declared an affiliation to one party is not to be taken lightly. To this, Muroyiwa argued that “It takes great skill to separate politics and church business in my local assembly.” He further explained that he is willing to answer truthfully any questions and ills of Zimbabwe African Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU PF). Politics must be a public profession. Muroyiwa’s action is essential, if the church is to make positive in-roads in political space, “I announced my motive at our first quarterly Conference to my church, and my elders and leaders call me Honourable Bishop.”²⁷ Accordingly, this can be regarded as coming out of the cocoon for the common good. Recently, Bishop Tudor Bismark echoed the *Taneta* (We are tired) jibe to a cheering congregation at his Jabula New Life International Ministries in May. In the sermon, the Bishop lamented about developing defilement and awful administration, comparing Zimbabwe to George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, and that Zimbabwe has turned into a web viral via web-based networking media.²⁸

In Zimbabwe, church pastors have utilized different techniques, from Bismark’s podium sermons to web-based social networking efforts, while others go for face to face encounters. Some have paid a cost for

²⁷ The AFM Quarterly conference is a gathering of many assemblies within a geographical demarcation for the purpose of revival.

²⁸ “Bishop Takes a Swipe at the Corrupt Political Leadership in Zimbabwe,” *Bulawayo 24 News*, <https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-news-sc-national-byo-88406.html>.

taking Mugabe's administration head on. A year ago, a minister situated in the resort town of Victoria Falls, Patrick Mugadza, spent Christmas and New Year's Eve in jail. This was after the young minister held a performance showing the scene of a ZANU PF party gathering. He held a placard requesting that Mugabe steps down. Witness Tawonga Vutabwashe of the HeartFelt International Ministry, an offshoot of the AFM in Zimbabwe, has of late joined the current fad reprimanding the ZANU PF government for enabling non-natives to elbow local people out of the economy. He faulted the authority, blaming it for neglecting to protect the interests of the nation when contracts are negotiated with outsiders.²⁹ The young Pastor Evan Mawarire has likewise been standing out as genuinely newsworthy through his online social media campaign against the government. 'This Flag' propelled in April this year was to stimulate political campaign using social media.

Although the AFM Constitution in Zimbabwe Section 15.31.1 states that, "No full-time worker may serve on any political body except in cases where the Apostolic Council is of the opinion that such service is in the interest of the Kingdom of God," the contemporary trends require that the church may revisit this position. I suggest that the AFM pastors must be allowed to develop their political theology to build on theological persuasions for both participation and development in Zimbabwe. The relationship between the AFM and politicians needs to improve. In fact, politics is an area that the church can ignore at their peril. Most of the AFM pastors are keen to comment and speak openly about the political situation in Zimbabwe. For example, the LWTS Principal Pastor Lovejoy Chabata said that clerical intervention on issues of policy and governance is a result of the economic downturn whose stinging impacts have not

²⁹ "Church Leaders Increasingly Speak up against Mugabe Misrule," *Religions in Zimbabwe*, 2016, <https://relzim.org/news/church-leaders-increasingly-speak-up-against-mugabe-misrule>.

spared the congregations. He further explained that as the entire nation reels under the regularly intensifying financial crisis, offerings and tithes which are real income streams in churches have begun reducing radically. Chabata said this situation has seen various churches neglecting to earn back the original investment with a portion of the urban congregations in leased settings, reducing the number of weekly gatherings as they cannot bear the cost of paying rentals and to support the pastors there. As is commonly said, a ravenous man is a furious man. Hence, the vitriolic voices from the pulpits, said Chabata.³⁰

On the other hand, the AFM National and Provincial Conferences are known to have occasional visits from prominent political figures in Zimbabwe of both ZANU PF and the MDC. For instance, *ZimEye* argued that the MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai attended an AFM Saturday service but did not give a political speech, and this left many people speculating about his visit.³¹ One way or the other, the politicians and the church are attracted to each other. In fact, the pastors and the church leadership may make a meaningful contribution and bring a new paradigm to the political space in Zimbabwe. It has dawned to many politicians in Zimbabwe that churches are vital elements in the game of politics. The church should embrace the politicians, inspire them and in-turn take the lead from them. Instead of swearing in the elected leaders, they need to occupy some of those seats as well, so they would be involved in issues of good governance. In this case, pastors must not play a subservient role to politicians. Frank Chikane argued that Pentecostals have concentrated on the belief in the hereafter, thus avoiding the challenges

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "In Pictures: Why Tsvangirai Visited AFM Church," *ZimEye*, 2017.

of the present today.³² It is evident that the AFM has not developed strategies of how best to participate in politics and relate to the social and economic development. One of the reasons that the government did not quickly register the AFM in Zimbabwe was its failure to be involved in humanitarian programmes like building hospitals and schools.³³ Accordingly, it is my argument in this chapter that the voices from pastors who are already participating in the political issues of Zimbabwe are essential to promoting good citizenship, political reconstruction and involvement in development in Zimbabwe. Pentecostals have an ability to precipitate socio-economic mobility.³⁴ The prosperity gospel is an example of this ability which needs further investigation.

It is crucial to admit that believers carry state politics in their hearts to the church, and furthermore the reality of things will be seen in the heat of political campaigns and elections, and there is a possibility of instability in churches. Believers yearn for a political awakening, they talk about politics almost every day, even in church. The church leaders seem to become critical of the 92-year-old President, then increasingly offering brutal politics.³⁵ Further, church leaders have stayed out, and those involved praised the President for their safety, but currently, the scenario is changing since everyone is feeling the impact of the economic crash.

³² R. Sider, "Interview with Rev. Frank Chikane," *Transformation*, 5(2), 1988, p. 12.

³³ L. Togarasei, "Historicizing Pentecostal Christianity in Zimbabwe," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 42(1), 2016, p. 2.

³⁴ D. Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World their Parish*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002, p. 87.

³⁵ "Church Leaders Join Anti-Mugabe Drive," *The Zimbabwean: A Voice for the Voiceless*, 2016, www.thezimbabwean.co/2016/06/church-leaders-join-anti-mugabe-drive.

One would expect the AFM in Zimbabwe as the mother of Pentecostalism to be on the fore front of such critic. To the contrary the AFM maintains a deafening silence.

Most of the participants could not exhaustively explore the reasons that motivated them to participate in politics. The common reason was the biblical position that it is God who ordains the leader. Munemo said,

One of the scriptures that inspired me to take up politics is Amos 5:14-15, 24 ... Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish justice in the gate ... But let justice run down as waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.

This conviction suggests that even pastors are eligible for political participation. Ideally, the laws that are made by the government affect faith issues. The church has always lagged behind in these decisions and wants to pray later when they could make contributions before laws are passed. These findings suggest that the pastors have a unique responsibility to teach believers regardless of the political affiliations they belong to; the church must show the crucial role of the church in law making, taking part in law campaigns and interpreting what the AFM thinks as right rather than ignoring those campaigns.

The church is a higher institution and pastors preach to all these people despite their political affiliations. Therefore, the church must be taught what God expects in politics. In this case, if the church explains governance and reconciliation issues it goes a long way to impact development issues in Zimbabwe. For instance, Pastor Munemo with other church-based organizations sent an open letter to President Robert Mugabe, ordering him to refrain from political atrocities, as hard conditions are bedevilling the Zimbabwean populace. Further, he was given a deadline

of 28th September 2016 or else the churches would exercise their democratic rights to petition parliament to impeach him.³⁶ Although the impact of this letter is not clear, these efforts by the AFM pastor and others were plausible. The violence perpetuated by ZANU PF had become a systemic violence affecting the people's rights and dignity. As such, rising the pastoral political voices had a liberative effect on human sanctity. True reconciliation comes only when there is an adequate confrontation of the roots of violence.³⁷ Although the participant had no intention to encourage more AFM pastors into politics, it was worthy that they learnt from other veteran pastoral voices from the missionary churches like Sabastian Bakare, Ambrose Moyo and Pious Ncube. Pastoral political voices must break through denominational boundaries and begin to work together. Banana argued that the Zimbabwean church has the mandate to speak for the Christian victims of the hostile society and embrace those who have been denied of their development and stripped of their humanity.³⁸

Pastors and religious leaders, especially in Pentecostalism, have a role to play in the development of Zimbabwe. Munemo argued that "the way some pastors handle finances in churches leaves a lot to be desired from the world." This suggests that there is need to turn the prosperity gospel which is often viewed negatively, into strategies for development in Zimbabwe. Maposa and Marongwe contend that in Zimbabwe, there is another brand of Pentecostal liturgy and worship which is showing the

³⁶ "Open Letter to the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, His Excellency R.G. Mugabe," *News Day*, 2016.

³⁷ K. Asmal, L. Asmal and R.S. Roberts, *Reconciliation through Truth: A Reckoning of Apartheid's Criminal Governance*, Cape Town: New Africa Books, 1997, p. 46.

³⁸ Canaan Banana, *The Gospel According to the Ghetto*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1990, p. 4.

‘materialization of Pentecostalism.’³⁹ Many Pentecostal places of worship in Zimbabwe have moved toward becoming what is called ‘gosprenurship,’ whereby the houses of worship and Pentecostal prophets are running lucrative businesses and riches creation machinery.⁴⁰ It is therefore my argument that the pastors in the Pentecostal church must turn the good news of prosperity into development programmes to benefit the suffering populace in Zimbabwe.

Towards Pastoral Political Voices in the AFM

This chapter suggests that the AFM must develop policies and strategies to encourage the AFM to political participation. The AFM philosophy of involvement in politics must be built on the continuum that the AFM needs to hear the political voices of their pastors. Such position proposes that the Pentecostals in Zimbabwe need a deconstruction of their political theology for the congregations to take part in the political issues. The pastors must vigorously use liberation theology tools to undo the Pentecostal beliefs, myths and legends that counteract the freedom for engagement in politics. For example, for active citizenship to happen, the AFM pastors must move beyond spiritual warfare, demonology, and ecstatic faith claims of wealth, and through sobered teaching, research and career guidance the church must be equipped in the areas of health, business, employment and education.

It is vital to answer how moral inquiries, for example, the Pentecostal convictions, myths and legends, can encourage cooperation in political issues. The sermons must also prioritize teaching that has heavenly meaning with social transformation, highlighting the importance for

³⁹ R. Maposa and N. Marongwe, PHDS, "Gosprenurship, Globalization and the Pentecostal 'New Wave' in Zimbabwe," *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences*, vi(1), 2015, p. 1.

⁴⁰ J. Mbiriyaamveka, "A Calling or a Family Affair?" *Herald*, 2013.

believers to be active citizens and responsible politicians. Ogbu Kalu noted that some Pentecostals believe that spiritual intercession is a form of political praxis because in prayer and fasting people seek to shape history.⁴¹ This can be done through the Living Waters Theological Seminary (LWTS) (the AFM training wing), formerly known as Rhodesia African Theological College. The Seminary was founded in 1974 by Reverend Wilson, an American missionary, who was the first principal, and was led by Dr. Gerald Rozzell (1982-1990), Dr Constantine Murefu (1991-2014) and now Apostle Lovejoy Chabata. It is evident that LWTS has defined its space within the training vocation, attracting students from Mozambique, Botswana, South Africa, Kenya, DRC, and other countries. However, during its 43 years of existence, the LWTS curriculum has not forged a meaningful political theology module within its Diploma of Pastoral Studies programme. So, it is imperative that the students and lecturers must be prepared to develop a relevant political theology. Pentecostalism needs a change in thinking towards political engagement and sensitivity. The approach must be aggressive, not a neutral, apolitical or weak political theology. The church must be forceful when it comes to politics, ringing its bells through the grey areas of politics.

The current Pentecostal prophetic mantle has stooped low, characterized by prophecies of miracle money, weight loss, disappearance of private parts, identity card numbers, miracle babies, prosperity living and so forth. Hameno summarizes the current Zimbabwean prophetic schema in Pentecostalism as bizarre, outrageous, criminal and immoral.⁴² It is opportune for the pastors in the AFM to proffer their prophetic task

⁴¹ Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 196.

⁴² N. Hameno, *The Political and Social Impact of Prophetic Churches in Zimbabwe*, St. Augustin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2014.

targeting economic recovery, sound governance and healthy politics in Zimbabwe. The miracles must be incarnated into sound economic strategies. Thus, the theology of development must be premised on the providence of God. Jesus did not merely redeem the people, but was also concerned with their sustenance.

The disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so that they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."⁴³

It was the disciples who identified the problem, the shortage and the struggles of the people. Jesus' response was first targeted to the disciples to make strategies and feed the people. It is the divine part of the church, especially those in leadership, to meet the needs of the believers and the society at large. Further, the Pentecostal belief in the empowering Holy Spirit should be instrumental in the socio-cultural development which focuses on people to have control of their lives. The church should come out of a begging mentality, seeking help to come from elsewhere. It must leave the spectator mode to become active participants in development.

The church continues to be relevant when it incarnates its mission with the socio-economic challenges of the people in the society. Chitando argues that a relevant church is the one with the ability to connect and deal with the practical problems the people are facing.⁴⁴ Consequently, the participation approach calls for the pastors in the AFM to deliberately transform their in-house elections done every triannual as stepping stones to encourage the believers to take part in Zimbabwean elections and vote. For instance, Marshall acknowledged that the Pentecostal churches in Nigeria are "self-conscious" with a goal of making history and bringing

⁴³ Mathew 14:15-16.

⁴⁴ Ezra Chitando, "'In the Beginning was the Land': The Appropriation of Religious Themes in Political Discourses in Zimbabwe," *Africa*, 75(2), 2005.

change in the society.⁴⁵ Since it is almost universal that many Christians do not vote or take part in demonstrations and political rallies, seeing pastors openly being involved in politics goes miles to remind the believers that Christians must be salt for the earth, a force for the common good in Zimbabwe. Congregants and men of the cloth are likewise inspired when they see others take up political positions and hearing political voices from the people who believe in their calling.

Conclusion

The chapter was primarily an exploration of the lived experiences and participation of the AFM pastors who have openly joined political parties. It was shown that the church had played a pivotal role in the democratization process of Zimbabwe up to post independence, but currently the role of the church needs to be revisited. The dual and hesitant approach for churches to participate in politics is still visible. Consequently, this chapter concluded that pastoral and political voices are alternative critical drivers in reconstructing the Pentecostal political engagement and meaningful development in Zimbabwe. It is both the pastoral calling and the experience of dealing with both the spiritual, social economic and psychological exposures that make the men of the cloth competent politicians. This chapter also argued that talking about political involvement from a domain of believers has not helped in changing both the political and development contexts of Zimbabwe. The Pentecostal belief in the prosperity gospel needs further investigation about how it can be a contributor to the development of the people. The chapter has shown that there is an increase of pastors who speak openly

⁴⁵ Here they could follow the example of some Pentecostal churches in Nigeria that are “self-conscious” with a goal of making history and bringing change in the society (R. Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009, p. 242).

about the political situation in Zimbabwe. So, focusing on the pastors to be on the political front is a reconstruction of the political engagement which strengthens the role of the church in politics.

Chapter 14

Towards an African Theology of Life and Human Dignity

Maake J.S. Masango

The Spiritual life is the whole of one's life insofar as it is motivated and determined by the Holy Spirit, the spirit of Jesus.”¹

A. Nolan

Introduction

The great and wonderful gift that God has given to human beings is life, full of dignity. We are therefore charged to manage and take care of our lives. In Africa, self-management is closely related to one's world. It means how one lives his or her life is part of the management of this gift. Self-management is all about the living of the highest quality of human life, as well as being able to enjoy life, full of dignity in a positive Ubuntu style. Bhengu had this to say about life lived in the style of Ubuntu:

The enjoyment of life (with dignity) implicates that a person is aware of the value which gives joy to life and how to pursue this, especially being the master of life, as a person in the milieu of community and society.”²

¹ A. Nolan, *Biblical Spirituality*, Springs: Order of Preachers of South Africa, 1982, p. 7.

² M.J. Bhengu, *Ubuntu: The Essence of Democracy*, Cape Town: Novalis Press, 1996, p. 64.

The enjoyment of life is part of living as much as Ubuntu is part of humanity. In fact, one grows with the Ubuntu concept from early childhood, especially in rural African villages. As people grow and relate to each other, they are taught by the elderly to pass on what they learn to another person. This is the beginning of the theology of life, full of dignity, which requires that we care for each other. The notion of caring manifests itself in the respectful and humble way elders and superiors are greeted and addressed by the younger ones. This kind of Ubuntu is passed on from one generation to the other. It will not be wrong to say that a human being is nothing but humanness or *Umntu* (based on the Zulu word for a person). This concept has its roots in the creation story of the Bible. In the story, human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. Genesis captures this beautifully:

So God created man [sic] in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.”³

This scripture shows the great way in which we acquired our dignity as God created us. This part of dignity became a way of living with other human beings. In an African village context, the image and likeness of God is revered and when one adds the concept of Ubuntu, there emerges an African spirituality which forms values and good character in a person. These concepts are part of humanity from the beginning of the creation story. For example, Hermes (from Egypt) wrote about these concepts, and Pythagoras continued writing and developing the ideas further as he studied in Africa. Later, some of the African philosophers (Soclits and Onuphis) taught Hermes about the ‘inner values and African concepts of humanness,’ which were given to human beings by God. An African writer by the name of Koka connected the above ideas by developing the concept of respect and connecting the ideas to African spirituality. For example, he says: “The word ‘Ntate’ (father) is used to address

³ Genesis 1:27.

an old man or respected Father figure in the village or community.”⁴ When children or young ones use the word Ntate, they are showing a sign of respect to that adult person, and in him they see the one who shapes them into good citizens. As children continue to grow in the village, they are then shaped in respecting people, and the concept of ubuntu becomes part of their life. Broodryk reminds us that:

Man [sic] was declared “Human” as soon as the element of “divine” (image) goodness (likeness) was instilled in him. This divine element that transformed man (matter) into a human being was nothing but a humanness, “ubuntu” that manifested the “image and likeness” of God in each individual person of the human race.”⁵

Broodryk points out that it was the spark of life that transformed human beings into living souls and made them different from the rest of created beings. Again Broodryk reminds us that this concept of ubuntu was there from ancient times, and it never ceased to exist within the circles of the human race of well-known ancient philosophers who in turn were scholars of the Hermetic Philosophy, theology and science which were based on the “logos” (creative word) and the doctrine that was taught by African priests of Hermes in Egypt. For example, Pythagoras was one of those who studied this concept for twenty-two years at the University of Heliopolis under two Egyptian high priests - Socht and Onuiphis. Their theory was centered around the inner value and dignity of the human personality” which is nothing else but “humanness” instilled in human beings. The reader will now understand where our dignity comes from. The summary of their theory was further developed by Savory who finally said:

⁴ K.D. Koka, *Ubuntu: A People's Humanness*: Pretoria: Ubuntu School of Philosophy, 1999, p. 13.

⁵ J. Broodryk, *Ubuntu: Life Lessons from Africa*, Pretoria: Ubuntu School of Philosophy, 2004, p. 1.

God did not only endow man [sic] with his goodness but also equally inseminated this divine element into all human beings.⁶

The above quotation reminds us of the connection between creation (that is, image of God) and the gift of life (breath, breathed in all human beings), which brings us closer to the concept of Ubuntu, that leads into deep African spirituality. As human beings, we are always searching for a higher being. The question to ask is, what is spirituality? In addition, how is it connected to dignity of life?

The Concept of African Spirituality

The theme of spirituality has become a common word in modern life. Current interest in spirituality is evident both at popular and scholarly levels. The theme is heard from radio and TV. These days it is also shared in seminars, conferences, universities, classes, course work and curricula. Modern society is re-visiting this old concept once again, to reinstate the values of life and dignity of Ubuntu that has been lost. Why? South Africans lost their concept of life with dignity, connected to Ubuntu. during apartheid times, when they fought for their liberation. During those days, life and dignity of humanity lost its meaning - especially the concept of the image and likeness of God, which kept them respecting each other. In the new democracy, with the emphasis on human dignity and human rights, the community is trying to recover old concepts that kept villages and people respecting each other. The above has given us reason why we should re-evaluate and re-examine the concept of Ubuntu.

In the new democracy of South Africa, people are in need of good life, or are searching for a deeper meaning of theology of life. The main question to ask is how the church or religious institutions can address the spiritual hunger that is being experienced by the people in South Africa.

⁶ P. Savoy, *The Best of African Folklore*, Cape Town: Struik, 1988, p. 29.

It is also important to note with interest that many African people are now tracing back their African roots. For example, after the 1976 riots, many parents “started naming as well as re-naming their children with African names.” This was a way of retaining their human dignity. They departed from naming and using their English names as a way of being known. This concept is also seen through changing names of cities such as Louis Trichardt to Makhado, or Pretoria to Tshwane. From the beginning of 1994, listening on Radio 702, one could hear the efforts of white announcers learning and struggling how to call or pronounce the various African names in radio discussions. These changes are shifting old concepts of western ways of thinking into new African ways of life. On the other hand, the church is still struggling to address these issues of change. The struggles will continue as the new democracy grows. The result of these changes caused one of the Presbyterian Churches to overture the General Assembly in 1999. The problems that they were seeking to address African Spirituality and ancestor veneration. Our white members were questioning the above problem - especially the issue of occultism and idolatry. They felt the church was too liberal and accepting everything that was African as we were approaching the new democracy. The debates were high as African people were trying to define ways of recapturing their Africanness. This was one way of recapturing their lost human dignity. The reader needs to note that the question of African spirituality and ancestor veneration as a cult became a crucial topic for African delegates at that assembly. African people centered their arguments on the respect for the dead. They argued that the respect of the dead was an important way of showing signs of respect to leaders who lived a good life full of dignity, even though apartheid denied them this kind of dignity. The argument was based on the concept of ubuntu and not on ancestor worship. The African delegates found themselves caught in areas of dualism. This concept became part of their lives, because of Christianity. They found themselves practicing the African way of life,

and keeping Christian principles which were clothed in foreign and western thought patterns.

The debates made them aware that some Africans are caught in this kind of dualism; they live their lives in the Western as well as in the African way of life. Other Africans blamed colonialism for these two kinds of life. Those who favoured Christianity as a way of life rejected those who practiced an African way of life. They referred to them as hedonists or unchristian. In other words, Christians were seen as good people. Behind this struggle is a way of trying to capture their human dignity. However, the quarrels continued destroying God's image in them, and it continued to divide Africans into two camps. History became an important way of arguing, especially regarding the concept of missionaries who brought this new way of life. For example, as missionaries continued to work among the Africans, they had to leave their African way of life and embrace western concepts of life as a good way of living. This process also affected them in the way they respected the dead. In some villages, graves are divided. They developed a process of dividing Africans graveyards into three parts - one for the Christians, one for non-Christians and another for Catholic believers. The division undermined the relationship between Christians and non-believers. For example, Christians saw themselves as righteous, while others were sinners. The dignity of life was lost to such an extent that families were divided. After the new democracy that process was stopped. The reader will now understand why South Africans are trying to recapture the theology of life full of dignity. The above process caused some of the African's to resort to their African way of life and customs. The Missionaries missed the point when they said that the concept of ancestor relationship is idolatry, forgetting the connection of respect for the dead and the notion of Ubuntu. There is a great belief among Africans that if a person lived a good life and dies, that person becomes a good ancestor. He or she is able to connect with higher powers, because it is believed that that person is in heaven.

Another belief is that the person is given to another world (eternal life) - hence when they bury them, they provide food and other important items that are buried with them. The final belief is that ordinary human beings cannot speak to God directly, because God is not their equal- hence ancestors become a bridge between the lower and the higher Being. The author is aware that Jesus is our mediator, who connects us directly to God. I am merely stating the case of those who believe in the system of ancestorship. The above concept sheds some light to the way some Africans communicate in life, and thus, should not be taken lightly by those who do not operate in that world of communication. As a strategy, this process could be used to connect them with the Christian belief systems.

The difficulty of some Africans speaking directly to a hierarchy (or Supreme Being) is a problem in certain rural areas. The same system of using a spokesperson (Indunas or mediators), especially when speaking to a king is the same type of communication when the ancestors act as mediators. Some people therefore brought that same process of communication into the Christian practices. They find it difficult to talk directly to a higher being without a spokesperson. This is a way some of them respect human life. That is why, when they share their problems, they will always seek a mediator, because they feel that they are talking to someone who is not their equal. In other words, they will share their problems, happiness and sadness, or any other difficulty through a mediator. The concept of hierarchy and authority comes into play whenever they feel the person to be higher in position. For example, when one connects the above process with the concept of *induna* (spokesperson) or spiritual mediator; one will begin to understand the world of communication among African people. They operate this way in life. Mbiti reminds us that:

The African view of the universe or the world understands spiritual mediators as people who fill up the area between man [sic] and God.”⁷

This concept can be a beautiful and beneficial contribution in understanding the world of communication among Africans, especially when introducing Christianity and the concept of Jesus as mediator. It could have helped them connect to the world of Jesus as saviour of the world, especially its process of mediation. Therefore, one can only speak to the king through a spokesperson. It makes sense that one can only speak to the King (God) through ancestors or mediators, especially the good ones who lived their life to the fullest. The reader needs to remember that only good role models are respected, especially those who have shared their good behaviour with others in the village. In other words, life is honoured between the living and the dead. Let us now analyze the issue of death, which will help us to develop the concept of spirituality that leads to Ubuntu.

Death of Good Elders

Not everybody becomes an ancestor in the true African life. For example, those who lived bad lives can never be considered as ancestors when they die. In Africa, death does not represent the end of human existence, but rather a change in its status. The notion of death creates a solution of continuity between the living and the dead - a solution marked by the differences on the scale between the “creditors” (the dead) and those “debtors” (their heirs). Belief in the existence of spirits is widespread throughout Africa. Mbiti continues to share the above idea by saying that:

It is a natural consequence of the strong belief in African religion that human life does not terminate at the death of the individual, but continues beyond death. It follows, therefore, that there must be myriads upon

⁷ John Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, Nairobi: Heinemann, 1977, p. 76.

myriads of human spirits. Many of them appear in legends, myths and folk stories; others are spoken about in normal conversations among people; and some possess people, or appear to people in visions and dreams.”⁸

In other words, the African world has been interacting between the world of the living and the dead. This is how African people respect life, especially of a person who had lived a good and dignified life. Note that the process begins even before the last breath of the elderly has been breathed out. We are now entering the area of deep human spirituality through the process of death. For example, in certain villages, elders become living ancestors as they reach the prime age in their lives. They become spiritual advisors to the young ones. This process starts when they are sharing their spiritual gifts or insights while they are still alive, and then proceed to do so when they pass on to the other life. At the point of death or passing to another world, some of the villagers believe that they (ancestors) share the image and likeness of God. In short, they are closer to God. Abimbola, when sharing this idea of good ancestors says:

It is important to note that not all dead people automatically attain the status of ancestorship. Death is not always a requirement for it. The notion of ancestor ship implies the idea of selection, before any other consideration to a social model based on the idea of exemplification in the strictest sense of the word the good elder becomes an image of God when he [sic] dies”⁹

In other words, an ancestor is someone who has reached a great age and maturity in life, who, during his or her lifetime has acquired a vast experience of life, including deep spirituality. Thus, the theology of life with dignity is captured by how one lived his/her life on earth with others. Hence, they share their rich experiences and spiritual life with younger

⁸ Ibid, p. 70.

⁹ J.K. Olupona, *African Spirituality: Forms and Meanings and Expressions*, New York: Herder & Herder Books, 2000, p. 11.

villagers. This process starts in the prime of one's life. Respect, kindness and love towards others are of utmost importance. There are certain expectations required from a good elder, especially during their last stages of life. Their death must conform to the rules of the village or society to which they belong. Awolalu shares a good explanation on this issue of the death of an elder.¹⁰ He says:

Death by "ill reputed" diseases [such as leprosy] or by accident [especially if provoked by lightning] means exclusion from the village of being an ancestor.¹¹

The above quotation takes seriously the steps to good ancestorship. The requirements lead to a position of maturity in a good life that develops a deep spirituality in the life of an elder. That life plays an important part in forming a good person - especially towards entry into the world of ancestorship. In other words, living a good life as well as sharing your values with others, creates a good personality that will remain with the villagers even when one has died. A further explanation is that living a good life (full of dignity) as well as sharing good values with others even when one has died, leaves good memories that are internalized and used when difficulties of life approach. One can use the wisdom shared by good ancestors. I want to remind the reader that the dead are alive, because we keep quoting them, and as we do so, they live in our memories, and are alive in our conversations. In short, passing on of knowledge or wisdom creates a world of humanness (Ubuntu) among people. In other words, life becomes dignified when shared with others. The concept is further developed by a deep reverence for the dead (ancestors) by African people. Those who lived a good and dignified life that affected positively those who remain will receive such reverence. Other

¹⁰ J.K. Olupona, *African Traditional Religion in Contemporary Society*, St. Paul, Minnesota: Paragon House, 1991.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 6.

Africans believe that the society of these glorious dead represents a perfect community, unlike the society of the living, where one finds good and bad people, pure and impure people, handsome and ugly people, and so forth. The above world introduces one to a concept of dualism, which is only experienced by the living, while the dead, especially good ones, experience goodness alone. Mbiti summarizes this issue by saying:

In the land of the dead, contradictions, tensions, and oppositions are exempted.¹²

Zahan continues with the idea further, saying:

The world of the ancestors is one that is free of antitheses and violence, because it resides in a slow time. Ancestors can, of course, become incensed and they are even susceptible to suffering.¹³

Returning to the overture of whites in the Presbyterian Church, they understood the world of ancestorship as a cult or idolatry, and thus misunderstood the development of the dignity of life and spirituality that was connected to this concept, especially by those Africans who were Christians. If they understood this world of ancestorship, how it operates, they would not have overtured the General Assembly, because good ancestors are taken as people who are closer to God. Therefore, African people will always talk or communicate with them because of this relationship. The reader hopefully will understand the concept of communication that occurs between a servant and the king. The Indunas or mediators (sometimes called spokespersons) play an important part. With the above facts in mind, let us now analyze how African values connect and are shaped in an African community.

¹² John Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy*, Oxford: Heinemann, 1990, p. 36.

¹³ J.K. Olupona, *African Spirituality: Forms and Meanings and Expressions*, New York: Herder & Herder Books, 2000, p. 11.

African Values

The concept of Ubuntu, as lived in the village and connected to the idea of ancestorship, shapes the way of living that respects human beings, the life of fellow beings, the elderly, as well as the village community. At this stage, one can live with other people in a respectable way. It is a common saying among Africans that it takes the whole village to raise a child. The statement captures good values, ethics and spiritual development of a person—it is holistic. These values shape human beings so that they honour and respect others who share divine life with them. This type of process forces one to internalize African values as a way of life that leads to dignity. In other words, in an African community a person is expected to be in relation with other people. That is why an adult can discipline any child who is out of step within the village. It is part of shaping values, ethics and spiritual life of a child. In the African village one is not allowed to live life alone like an island. Mbiti emphasizes this point by reminding us that:

An individual does not exist alone except corporately.”¹⁴

In other words, a way of life [which the author calls spiritual life] is lived in community with others. Donker, on the other hand, had this to say about individualism:

The individual is not a physical being, but a spiritual and divine individual, who lives with other human beings.¹⁵

It is interesting to note that in the world of Africans, the paternal (spiritual) and the Godly (divine) attributes of the individual are fully explored within the community. Life can never be lived alone. In South

¹⁴ John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, London: Heinemann, 1969, p. 109.

¹⁵ A.E. Donker, *African Spirituality: On Becoming Ancestors*, Trenton: Africa World Press, 1997, p. 8.

Africa, the Nguni tribe shares another element of life that shapes a human being, through a powerful proverb that says: *Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu* which means “a person is a person because of other people.”

In other words, you cannot live a life of your own; you need other people who will help you live life to the fullest. This way of sharing life shapes the dignity in human beings. Growing up in the village, I discovered and came to appreciate that one is a communal being who was, and is still nurtured and shaped by the ethos of other villagers. This means that it took the whole village to formulate my spiritual life. The English saying became a reality to me when living with others: It says: “no man [sic] is an island.” This process of African spirituality formed and continues to form my own moral, ethical and spiritual world. I am aware that in the western world people must respect privacy and the space of an individual as well as of other people. In an African village (community), one is surrounded by lots of people, tribesmen and kinsmen and -women. Another concept that continues to shape African spirituality and values of a person’s dignity are the rites of passage (initiation) in the context of transformation during the maturational process. This process enables elderly people to share their experience with others at the initiation school. The rites of passage such as circumcision, marriage and burial are good examples, which shape the process of growth that leads to socialization and integration of a person or group to live harmoniously with other people. Initiation school is another place where human dignity is shaped.

In the African community, it is the responsibility of adults to shape children, so that they may learn how to live with others in the community.¹⁶

The above statement is important because it emphasizes how a community of adults shapes, nurtures and cares for the spiritual upliftment of the

¹⁶ G.M. Setiloane, *African Theology*, Orange Grove: Skotaville Publishers, 1986, pp. 13-16.

young ones within a village. African people are, by nature, nurturing and caring people. They live in the company of others and share concepts of raising children together. Therefore, being in relation to others, or belonging, represents the essential characteristics of being truly human. Hence, they have no private faith and spirituality. In other words, their faith and spirituality are communal.

Challenges

With the above facts in mind, I need to remind that the world has changed and continues to change in such a way that it challenges the above concept of African life, especially the concept of *Ubuntu*. For example, we are experiencing violence and abuse within African communities. As African people face such challenges of women and child abuse, they are forced to re-examine where the concept of Ubuntu broke down. They need to analyze the way they are raising their children in these modern times. Today, the question they need to ask is, “Is the village failing or has it collapsed in its African structure of caring and nurturing children? Has the concept of human dignity changed because of globalization?” They also need to dig deep into their African concept of spirituality, checking whether it is helpful in building the nation to its original way of living and respecting each other as they did before. These challenges of abuse and violence in South African society are deeply rooted in the yearning for understanding that they are in relation to other human beings. Pato is helpful in sharing the following insights about these new challenges.

These challenges help us to dig deep into African wisdom and spirituality. They also help us to re-examine our problems and then meet the challenges that faces us in South Africa.¹⁷

¹⁷ C. Kourie and L. Kretzschmar, *Christian Spirituality in South Africa*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 2000, p. 96.

The above challenges introduce us to the world of globalization. Globalization and modernism present us with new challenges that force Africans to re-examine their faith, human dignity and lifestyle. In the older days, African people were working and relating closely to each other. The author is aware that the African community is breaking down; hence, these problems of abuse and violence are emerging. We are losing our concept of human dignity that held life with care. African people need to examine and analyze the social structures of their communities, that is, tracing where the blockages are or brokenness occurred, especially those of abuse and violence. They further need to ask questions on why they are experiencing these kinds of problems. These questions will also help them realize that their whole pattern of life was viewed as religious from birth to death, and now it is being challenged by globalization. Secularization is changing these concepts of the whole process of African life which was based on spirituality. From the beginning, when a child was born, the naming, going through circumcision, confirmation to man or womanhood, marriage, work, dying and burial are going through challenges, even though they are still viewed as sacred and develop one's spiritual personality. Through this process, a lot is expected from their elders, especially in rural areas.

As repositories of sacred traditions, the elders are bound by higher moral imperative to be accountable to the community and their eternal predecessors, i.e. the ancestors.¹⁸

These great expectations, not only from the community but also from the ancestral world are enforced upon them because of communal life. These concepts are also taught to children so that they grow up knowing them. That is why people who have accumulated experience within the village are expected to pass it on to the next generation before their own death.

¹⁸ L. Mageza, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life*, New York: Orbis, 1997, p. 55.

This process of accountability is expected from all members of the community. A person who follows it qualifies to be a good ancestor after death. On the other hand, those who have lived and led an unethical life on earth are pronounced guilty, and excluded from ancestorhood upon of death. In other words, they have misled others and did not play a prominent role in shaping spiritual personality. They were not accountable to the community while alive. Olupona is right when he challenges elders:

Their challenge then is to build into the spirit of Ubuntu, a new dimension of Citizenship to villagers.¹⁹

The expectation from elders is to live a good life that will eventually influence others to develop their own spiritual personality and thus become good citizens, good neighbours as well as fellow relatives, holding the dignity of life, as they share it with others. Now the reader will realize that certain parts of urban areas are faced squarely with the above challenge. Because of the above changes and challenges, people are in search of the missing link of their life as well as the spirit of Ubuntu; due to the new democracy, they lost some of this way of living. Many people emphasize the individual rights more than the communal rights. That spirit of living together is slipping away. Those who live in South Africa will understand why we are battling with the issue of crime, abuse and violence. The new society must deal with basic ways of returning to the spirit of Ubuntu, and harness it for productivity and for building the nation. As we cultivate this new spirit of Ubuntu, we need to harness it to manage the challenges of reconstruction and development.

The African spirituality that connects to the spirit of Ubuntu, will lead to team building, which helps form new values that shape a generation that will work for peace. "This spirit of Ubuntu will also help us to find a new

¹⁹ J.K. Olupona, *African Spirituality: Forms and Meanings and Expressions*, New York: Herder & Herder Books, 2000, p. 8.

identify which will transcend the ethnic divisions that haunt the African continent.²⁰

As we strive towards unity, it is the spirit of Ubuntu with its emphasis on working together, loving life and respecting human dignity that will help us find our way forward as a continent. After addressing these problems faced by the new generation, we can celebrate our global citizenship, where we can be both tribal and cosmopolitan.

Conclusion

African spirituality is holistic and it affects the dignity of life. It is not considered as an individual affair, because it is expressed at all levels of society, socially, economically, politically as well as among people—hence it contributes to building the nation. Pato identifies it in the following way:

African spirituality is identified as reflecting the wholeness of life and is important in harmonizing life in all its fullness.²¹

In short, African spirituality has to do with the concept of nation building and the integrity of creation. In that life, everyone is involved in rebuilding spirituality in the lives of others. Ancestors are also involved in this process.

Contemporary spirituality impacts on the totality of life, it is non-dualistic, it does not posit a bifurcation between the secular and the sacred.

²⁰ L. Mbigi and J. Maree, *Ubuntu: The Spirit of African Transformation Management*, Pretoria: Knowledge Resources, 1995, p. 9.

²¹ C. Kourie and L. Kretzschmar, *Christian Spirituality in South Africa*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 2000, p. 3.

It encompasses the entire life of faith, which includes body, mind, [and soul] as well as the social and political dimensions.²²

The concept of body, mind and soul also includes issues of ecology. This issue is an important part of life, especially in the way Africans relate to nature. They not only hold the dignity of life, but respect nature. In olden days, a tree was not cut before they performed a ritual of closing its life. This highlights the concept of spirituality which is ecological, manifesting sensitivity towards and solidarity with the earth. Africans regard Mother Nature not as an object of subjugation, but as a mother and symbol of the divine. Once again, in the olden days, Africans would not destroy anything in the forest, without sharing with nature what they were going to do. People were connected to nature, and had a great respect for God's creation. The connection with the whole of nature was therefore important, nurturing it instead of dominating it. In conclusion, life, full of dignity in an African village, is connected to the entire God created part of life. Africans are connected to God as much as creation is part of God. We are therefore charged to care for it. With the new developments that challenge us, we need to go back to basics, to the spirit of Ubuntu.

²² S. Kappen, *Spirituality in the New Age of Colonialism*, London: Duquce, Gutierrez, and the Institutional Crisis Publications, 1994, p. 33.

Chapter 15

Religion as a Positive Change in Human Societies in Southern Africa

Kenneth Nyamidzi

Introduction

Religion in development practices have managed to shape philosophies of government, education, economy and health. Societies experience a lot of impact from religions. Some societies are largely dependent on religion. In this chapter, I am concerned with the development of humanity in a society, which in our view is informed by religion and education. Core values of true development that would make a society 'more human' identified as sustenance, self-esteem and freedom from servitude are worth mentioning. This analysis places emphasis upon the fact that 'Religion' has had many positive impacts in developmental practices such as education and health. Many religious organizations have invested a lot in providing good solid education for children and health care where religion, through its diversity, has ensured that people are healthy and strong. Religions also invested in ecology, entrepreneurship, human rights, gender, children's rights and political development and democracy.

Background

Modern theories of development revolve around the term 'progress' by which is implied a movement from the past towards the future or towards new ways of doing things. Regarded as modernization, development then

becomes a process of updating older and inadequate traditional ways to modern trends, and a means to 'catch up' with the developed world. More often than not, the process of development in this model consists in shifting people from a subsistence, traditional, rural mode of life to the urban, modern, and industrial mode; resulting in the surrender of long established and cherished cultural norms and values of communities as has been the case in much of Africa.¹

The impact of religion on development is an ongoing process, which can clearly shape humanity and growth of world systems especially in Southern Africa and Africa at large. As the chapter seeks to highlight mostly the positive impacts on development practices, an a-developmental argument of religion will be cited portraying it as harmful to an individual and harmful to society; and that it is abused by the ruling elites to manipulate the society with a view to holding on to power in some countries in Africa.

It is interesting to note that people who are religious, however, are more likely to make the positive connection between religion and development.² Historically speaking, people in all parts of the world have assimilated and adapted notions of development that were originally conceived in Europe and were exported to Africa largely through colonial rule.

Definitions

In this section I will attempt to define two key words, which are 'Religion' and 'Development.'

¹ <http://scielo.org.za/scielo.php> [17.6.2017].

² L. Mullings, *Religious Change and Social Stratification in Labadi, Ghana: The Church of the Messiah*, New York: Academic Press, 1979.

The etymological Latin root '*religio*,' which is the source of the modern word "religion," was understood as an individual virtue of worship, never referring to doctrine, practice, or actual source of knowledge.³

Okuweze defined religion as a regulated pattern of life of a people in which experiences, beliefs and knowledge are reflected in man's conception of himself in relation to others, his social world, the physical as well as the metaphysical world.⁴ To Durkheim, religion is a source of social and moral order binding members of society to a common social project; a set of shared values and beliefs. The definition implies that religions unify societies and make the members to see themselves as a single individual, and as such pursue a common goal.

Religion can be considered as a historical point of departure for the modern conception of development.⁵ Gerrie ter Haar maintained that the cooptation of religious ideals by state and by political movements led in the 20th century to a variety of political projects that have been helpfully described a "coercive utopias," secular ideologies that aspire to create a model society.⁶ In our view the point here is that human development is an off-shoot of Religion.

The other word to be explained is development. There is too much lack of knowledge and too much pretense in the understanding of the term 'development.' As a result, different definitions have been propounded.

³ P. Harrison, *The Territories of Science and Religion*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2015.

⁴ M.I. Okuweze (ed), *Religion and Societal Development: Contemporary Nigeria Perspectives*, Lagos: Merit Int. Publishers, 2004.

⁵ Gerrie ter Haar and S. Ellis, "The Role of Religion in Development: Towards a New Relationship between the European Union and Africa," *The European Journal of Development Research*, 18(3), 2006.

⁶ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Act of Control: Global Turmoil on the Eve of the 21st Century*, Springfield: Collier Books, 1993.

According to the Penguin English Dictionary, development, derived from the noun ‘develop,’ implies movement from one level to another or increase in quality of some sort.⁷

Development is concerned with the improvement of the quality of life to be able to manage and induce change and exploit resources of an environment for the satisfaction of needs or goals at any given time.⁸ Similarly, Obasanjo defines development as a process concerned with people’s capacity in a defined area, over a defined period to manage and induce change and reduce or eliminate unwanted or unwarranted change.⁹ The two words, religion and development, combined are key elements for ‘human development,’ which, according to the United Nations, is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potentials and lead productive and creative lives in accord with their needs.¹⁰

Methodology

The chapter follows the qualitative approach in research guided by the ‘Empowerment’ conceptual theoretical framework. The theory seeks to increase the degree of autonomy and self-determination in people and in communities to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible

⁷ Penguin English Dictionary, 1977.

⁸ Walter Rodney, *Walter Rodney Speaks: The Making of an African Intellectual*, Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1990.

⁹ Olusegun Obasanjo, *The Leadership Challenge and Economic Reform*, New York: Crane Russak, 1991.

¹⁰ Gerrie ter Haar and S. Ellis, “The Role of Religion in Development: Towards a New Relationship between the European Union and Africa,” *The European Journal of Development Research*, 18(3), 2006.

and self-determined way, acting on their own authority.¹¹ Data will be gathered from sources based on historical and current textual analysis as well as the Bible.

Core Values of Development

Religion is necessary for human development when one considers the core values of true development of human species embedded in it. Notions of development are ultimately based on values of 'good life,' or how a society can move from 'less human' to 'more human' conditions.¹² The three core values for true development that would make society 'more human' were identified and these are: sustenance, self-esteem and freedom from servitude.

According to Goulet, 'sustenance' is the ability to meet basic human needs such as food, shelter, health and protection.¹³ If any of these are absent or are in limited supply, then society is less human. Are communities and societies in Southern Africa not subjected to abject poverty that makes the people less human through gluttony by the ruling class?

The second value is 'self-esteem,' which means a sense of worth and self-respect and of not being used by others. Societies develop ways of providing recognition and identity. In many colonized societies, there has been alienation and loss of self-esteem by local people as they have been confronted, and often overwhelmed, by alien values. In contemporary Western societies, self-esteem is often sought through material possessions. But for us Africans, where a child is born for the community, it

¹¹ R. Adams, Empowerment, *Participation and Social Work*, New York: Palgrave, 2008.

¹² D. Goulet, "The Cruel Choice: A New Concept in the Theory of Development," vol. 29(3), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

¹³ Ibid.

means that what one owns is communally owned. This reminds us of the unity and love of the First Century Church where the followers of Christ, 'Christians' lived and shared resources equitably.¹⁴ Unlike today, in Southern Africa where natural resources in gold, nickel, coal, diamonds, soil and trees in the form of timber vanish; and are not equitably distributed to the wider society of the 'People of God'. Strange!

The third core value is freedom from servitude. It is freedom from the debilitating material conditions of life as well as social freedom from the oppression of others, of institutions and ideologies and belief systems. In short, it is freedom from slavery of the environment, and from the governing institutions that have the mandate scripturally to safeguard lives of their marginalized subjects.

The key is to expand the choices available to human beings.¹⁵ If the core values are accounted for in governance, then the result could be an empowered society with the much-needed freedoms of association, expression and worship, which may not be attainable in some parts of Southern Africa.

Religion Empowers Society

Religion and religious activities can empower society in two ways. First, religious activities, such as church attendance, are social activities and thus comparable to meetings of football clubs, tennis clubs, scouts, political parties and many more. These meetings can be instruments for establishing networks that could be of use for economic activities in the region south of the Sahara. It could be helpful for establishing trading

¹⁴ Acts 2:42.

¹⁵ D. Goulet, "The Cruel Choice: A New Concept in the Theory of Development," vol. 29(3), Cambridge University Press, 1971.

relations with partners from other countries who belong to the same religious group. The example is, Islamic groups, Christian groups and one of our own – the African Traditional Religion (ATR), a religion where all those who belong to Africa belong to by birth and not by conversion. Such networks can in some ways stimulate economic growth.

The sentiments being expressed here, seem to derive meaning from the definition of the term ‘empowerment’ which, according to the Cornell Empowerment Group, stands for an intentional, ongoing process centred in the local community involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over their resources.¹⁶ Adams describes it as measures that are designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self-determination of a people.¹⁷ The community desires to stand on its own.

A second channel by which religion influences society is by the values that are taught by the adherents or most important leaders of the religion concerned. It is assumed that these values will influence actual behaviour and thus the functioning of society. This, therefore, means that religious beliefs and practices have played key roles in the development of various communities in the contemporary set-up.

If we look back, we find that in many primal cultures, religion was and still is the organizing principle of life. It was not called ‘religion’ as such, since it did not belong to a separate realm one could distance oneself from or reflect on objectively. Religion was the belief and knowledge system around which all reality was organized.

¹⁶ Cornell Empowerment Group (1989).

¹⁷ R. Adams, *Empowerment, Participation and Social Work*, New York: Palgrave, 2008.

Religion a Source of our Education

In the area of education, which is a critical development practice, religion has had a lot of influence as many schools in Southern Africa, if not all of Africa, were founded out of a religious motive. The idea was to inform and expose the locals to opportunities beyond what they knew. When the religious missionaries were on their course, education was one of the main goals that they had.

To-date there are still a number of educational institutions which are run and maintained by religious organizations throughout the region. In other words, nothing has changed. A primary example is the Catholic University, which is owned and run by the Roman Catholic Church in Zimbabwe. At higher tertiary level, several Christian bodies have also started their own universities.

The Anglican Church is in the process of setting up an Anglican university in Marondera. ZAOGA, under the guidance of Apostle Ezekiel Guti has put up a new structure and launched theirs in Bindura. A number have already followed suit. Those without universities have colleges and schools, which provide an excellent standard of education. The products from these institutions eventually become global leaders and make an impact wherever they are.

When people talk about world religions, they are often much familiar with mainly Judaism, Islam and Christianity. However, there are many other religions, which historically have managed to influence and shape their cultures. There is Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and the African Traditional Religion (ATR) and a few others, which also influence human development and spiritual transformation of their societies.

These glaring important roles of religions and religious studies need to be recognized and respected. Those who demean the important roles of religion should know that religion cannot wisely or safely be ignored or

neglected as it is by frivolous persons today. Even a defective or obsolete scheme of religion will serve the individual better than none. Religion clearly plays a significant role in integrating entrepreneurial skills and development of people in creating opportunities for revenue.

It has been suggested that a major reason for the phenomenal response of sub-Saharan Africa to the Christian faith in the last century has been the latter's close relations with Western education during the colonial and post-colonial era. Conversion to the Christian faith was imperative to the acquisition of Western education, which was and is still perceived as necessary for a comfortable lifestyle. Many parents would send their wards to school purposely to acquire Western education, knowing very well the underlying transformation in orientation and values that is related to the conversion from Traditional Religion to Christianity.¹⁸

The church obviously took advantage of the colonial support to establish schools all over the sub-continent, if not all of Africa, which has immensely contributed to the workers' needs of African nation-states both before and after independence from the respective colonial masters.

Religion and Health Development

As much as the traits of development can be significantly noticed in education, religions also play a role in health. Some organizations, churches and religious associations have built clinics, hospitals and health care centers in and around Zimbabwe. In some parts of Southern Africa, several organizations have been noted to be significantly affecting and developing their communities through provision of health care services and accessories including drugs, medicines and tools.

¹⁸ L. Mullings, *Religious Change and Social Stratification in Labadi, Ghana: The Church of the Messiah*, New York: Academic Press, 1979.

In Zimbabwe, there are so many churches, which have built clinics and hospitals including the Roman Catholic Church, ZAOGA (Mbuya Dorcas Hospital), the Anglican Church, which is currently working on such projects in Murehwa and other rural areas, the Salvation Army and the Methodists are among a number of other churches developing the Health sector. There is also a strong drive from the newly growing movements which are popularly known as the "Prophetic Movements" who are also making headway by holding a number of outreach programmes where specialized eye doctors, surgeons, dentists and the like, all go to different areas and for an allocated number of days provide their services to the communities for free.

In extension to such campaigns, other religious organizations also donate wheel chairs, glasses and other useful aids and resources mainly to old people and the less privileged in society. There have actually been organizations which have been formed by the Hindus and the Muslim faith who concentrate on providing health care facilities to African and marginalized countries in need.¹⁹ This type of religious development on health has been quite instrumental in improving the status on epidemics such as Malaria, HIV/AIDS among a number of other threats and diseases. Zachariah Wanakacha Samita argues that there is need for a "reconstructed 'Theology of Health.'²⁰ The Church can use its space to reach people, while church leaders should serve as role models in portraying responsibility with regard to sexuality.

¹⁹ A.K. Darkwa, "Aid or Hindrance? Faith Gospel Theology and Ghana's Incorporation into the Global Economy," *Ghana Studies*, 4, 2001.

²⁰ Z.W. Samita, "Christian Crusades in Nairobi: An Analysis of Socio-Religious Factors Underlying their Upsurge," Addis Ababa: Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa, no. 9, 1998.

Apart from wealth creation, the health care sector is also one which is largely influenced by religion in various ways. African Traditional Religion has always had a positive influence in terms of health care as African herbs and advice in many cases really helped people suffering from ailments and sicknesses of various kinds. There has also been a growing impact by other religions to develop the health of people in Africa in general and in Zimbabwe in particular.

Development of Environment and Ecology

Moving from health to environment and the ecological sector, there is notable development. The Anglican Diocese of Harare in 2013 launched the Green Church movement, a project that initially was the brainchild of the young people in the church. This project is aimed to ignite the love for the environment evoked in Genesis to be stewards and caretakers of our God-given land.²¹ This reminds us of our moral responsibility to care for the creation.

Nevertheless, on a negative note, humanity has become a-developmental as they are failing to uphold the mandate they were given as an instruction to maintain their environment as stewards appointed by the Creator. Some rivers are no more because of stream bank cultivation and siltation. There is a lot of artificial land degradation taking place in Southern Africa through haphazard methods of extracting rich minerals such as alluvial gold and diamonds.

However, the churches together have been running clean-up campaigns, tree planting and awareness programmes for the congregants and the public to be fully aware of how to be responsible in their own environment. The subject of ecology is being taken seriously in Africa. Africans

²¹ Genesis 1:28.

understand what St. Paul meant when he said that the creation is groaning.²²

In Kenya, for example, theologians have been addressing the causes of the ecological crisis in their country. They focused on issues such as geographical factors, poverty, and increase in population, rural-urban migration, ethnic factionalism, power strife, and corruption.²³

The basis of Catholic concern over climate change is exemplified in Psalm 24:1: "The earth is the Lord's and all that it holds." In response to the wonderful gift that God has given us of clean air, life-sustaining water, fruits from the land's harvests and even nourishment from the sea, we are called to not only honour God for these many blessings but also to do so by honouring his creation.

Pope Francis in his encyclical letter '*Laudato Si*,' believes that there are significant ecological problems today that need to be addressed.²⁴ They include not only problems in the natural environment, but also in the human sphere, particularly among the poorest.

Rural and Urban Development

There are also issues of development, especially rural development. The church is challenged to take a lead in talking about improving rural life, promoting indigenous technology, and even to establish insurance companies and social security in the risky social environment of contemporary and future Africa.

²² Romans 8:18-23.

²³ M.C. Mutoko, L. Hein and C.A. Shisanya, "Tropical Forest Conservation versus Conversion Trade-Offs: Insights from Analysis of Ecosystem Services Provided by Kakamega Rainforest in Kenya," *Elsevier Journals*, 2015.

²⁴ Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si!* of the Holy Father Francis on Care for our Common Home, Vatican: 2015.

In Zimbabwe for example, Econet Wireless in conjunction with the Catholic Church and probably other churches as well, has gone an extra mile in promoting and improving lives of the marginalized in rural and urban centers. They have come up with a funeral policy package affordable by the poor. This fulfills the point that religious development is concerned with the improvement of quality of life and the people's capacity in a defined area to be in a position to manage and induce change for their satisfaction.²⁵ This in a way shows that the society is empowered and moves from lesser states of humanity to a higher level of life, thus being more human.

Children's Rights and Development

Another issue in development is that of children's rights and security. For example, Mutoko et al have looked at how children are abused in Africa.²⁶ She challenges religious leaders to look at how the problem of child abuse can be curbed. She calls for change in the behaviour of the perpetrators, and even of the victims themselves. She challenges governments to take seriously child welfare policies and programmes.²⁷

Some of the questions she raises have to do with how to integrate children in the wider community than in the seclusion of orphanages. She challenges parents to understand that they are 'co-creators with God.' Parents should ensure that all their children are loved, and provide a

²⁵ Walter Rodney, *Walter Rodney Speaks: The Making of an African, Intellectual*, Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1990; Olusegun Obasanjo, *The Leadership Challenge and Economic Reform*, New York: Crane Russak, 1991.

²⁶ M.C. Mutoko, L. Hein and C.A. Shisanya, "Tropical Forest Conservation versus Conversion Trade-Offs: Insights from Analysis of Ecosystem Services Provided by Kakamega Rainforest in Kenya," *Elsevier Journals*, 2015.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

conducive environment for their growth and development.²⁸ There should be provision for sex education even in schools to make sure that causes of child abuse are eradicated. Child development is a key aspect of development in general, and when religion focuses on development, it guarantees a future for African nations and the globe in general.

Religion Promotes Entrepreneurship

Prinsloo, opposing Karl Marx known for his anti-religious sentiments, argues that religious studies in the quest to develop entrepreneurship in religion have made sure that there is increasing co-modification of diversity;²⁹ that is, the transformation of diversity, including religious diversity, into exchange values sold on the global capitalist market. Religious Studies students, in the spirit of creating entrepreneurship, should be taught how to produce and sell religious greeting cards, calendars, spiritual quotations and self-help books.

Today, in most parts of Southern Africa, through religion, founders of churches have become very rich through selling holy, spiritual and anointed products. In Zimbabwe, examples range from anointed products such as bricks, washing stones, oranges, water, salt, candles and oil to name just a few. These become examples of the increasing co-modification of diversity, including the Gospel of Prosperity now so prevalent in the region.

Their effects support the efforts to increase students' interest in the study of religion and simultaneously compel them to work harder to show that

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ M. Prinsloo, *Literacies, Global and Local*, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2008; Karl Marx, *Introduction: A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, 1844.

the world's religions represent something more than "merely commodities for consumption in the global spiritual shopping mall."³⁰ There is no doubt that the application of this will curb the existing unemployment among Religious Studies graduates. It will also lead to the generation of wealth.

African Traditional Religion has always been entrepreneuring. The adherents find jobs through the religious elements and their practices; some are traditional herbalists, soldiers and security men based on religious practices. This is similar to the Kamojor soldiers of Sierra Leone and the Bakassi in Nigeria.³¹ Religion has been entrepreneuring and still is.

Although the trend has been changing in recent times, it is unfortunately to the other extreme where through the 'Prosperity Gospel' the end goal of faith is understood as material gain and the God of faith is deemed a utilitarian God whose main interest is in the temporal comfort of the faithful. Because of the high currency of this gospel in Southern Africa, the faithful in the region have been encouraged to participate in the global economy mainly as consumers and not as producers of wealth.³²

Arguments against Religion Portrayed as Harmful

The introduction to this chapter critically noted that religion has over the years had many positive influences in development practices and that it has managed to shape philosophies of government, education, economy

³⁰ D. Wood, *Old Turtle*, 2001, www.ebay.com/itm/old-turtle/132075937203 [16.6.2017].

³¹ Gerrie ter Haar and S. Ellis, "The Role of Religion in Development: Towards a New Relationship between the European Union and Africa," *The European Journal of Development Research*, 18(3), 2006.

³² A.K. Darkwa, "Aid or Hindrance? Faith Gospel Theology and Ghana's Incorporation into the Global Economy," *Ghana Studies*, 4, 2001.

and health. However, other people argue that religion has negative aspects that probably have led some people to become skeptics. They argue that religion is harmful to society as much as it is to individuals. Some aspects of religion are criticized on the basis that they damage society as a whole. Weinberg says it takes religion to make good people do evil.³³ Some scholars also cite religiously inspired or justified violence, resistance to social change, attacks on science, repression of women, and homophobia as harmful to the society.³⁴

Major religious moral codes can lead to "us vs. them" group solidarity and mentality, which can dehumanize or demonize individuals outside their group as "not fully human," or less worthy. Results can vary from mild discrimination to outright genocide.³⁵

In some instances, religion is used for violence and killing of political opponents. Although the causes of terrorism are complex, it may be that terrorists are partially reassured by their religious views that God is on their side and will reward them in heaven for punishing unbelievers. These conflicts are among the most difficult to resolve, particularly where both sides believe that God is on their side and has endorsed the moral righteousness of their claims. The killers are told to kill all and that God will recognize his own.³⁶

³³ www.physlink.com/Education/essayweinberg.cfm, "A Designer Universe?" [4.6.2017].

³⁴ B. Russell, "Has Religion Made Useful Contributions to Civilization?" 2009, www.positiveatheism.org/his/russell112.htm [17.6.2017].

³⁵ www.physlink.com/education/essayweinberg.cfm, "A Designer Universe?" [4.6.2017].

³⁶ M. Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, Updated edition, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001.

Some people argue that religious violence is mostly caused by misinterpretations of the relevant religious ethical rules and a combination of non-religious factors. This includes the claim that events like terrorist bombings are more politically motivated than religious. Mark Juergensmeyer argues that religion does not ordinarily lead to violence but that it happens only with the coalescence of a peculiar set of circumstances, which may be political, social, and ideological; when religion becomes fused with violent expressions of social aspirations, personal pride, and movements for political change.

Karl Marx in his writings observed that religion opiates people.³⁷ He described it as a tool, which is used by the ruling class whereby the masses can shortly relieve their suffering through the act of experiencing religious emotions. It is in the interest of the ruling classes to instill in the masses the religious conviction that their current sufferings will lead to eventual happiness. Therefore, as long as the public believes in religion, they will not attempt to make any genuine effort to understand and overcome the real source of their suffering.³⁸ Even if the masses are experiencing hard times economically, politically and socially, they cannot revolt as they are drugged by religion. This sort of harm can be attributed to religion in a particular society. Machiavelli regarded religion as a tool, useful for a ruler wishing to manipulate public opinion.³⁹

Branden states that some people have criticized the effects of adherence to dangerous practices such as self-sacrifice in line with inadequate

³⁷ Karl Marx, 'Introduction:' *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, 1844.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, www.gutenberg.org/files [04.11.2016]

medical care.⁴⁰ Studies have found instances of deaths of children due to religion-based medical neglect. Most cases involved religious parents relying on prayer to cure the child's disease, and withholding medical care.⁴¹ In the case of Zimbabwe, for example, there are white garmented 'Mapositori,' of different sects, who willingly do not take their children to hospital for treatment. This is all done in the name of religion and it results in the deaths of many children in a society.⁴² Existing laws should be adequate to protect children from all forms of medical neglect. The sects demean progress on women by child marriages and inhibiting adherents to access health care.

In some countries, because of religion, women are compelled to undergo genital mutilation. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), female genital mutilation has no health benefits. It is a violation of human rights, and though no known religious texts prescribe the practice, some practitioners do believe there is support for it. Local structures of power and authority, such as community leaders, religious leaders, circumcisers, and even some medical personnel contribute to upholding the practice. This is done to ensure that the affected women do not engage in immoral activities as they lose sexual desire.

While there is positive development in other societies as mentioned earlier who are building hospitals, schools and foundations taking care

⁴⁰ N. Branden, in A. Rand, *The Voice of Selfishness: A New Concept of Egoism: Mental Health versus Mysticism and Self-Sacrifice*, New York: New American Library, 1964.

⁴¹ S.M. Asser, R. Swan, "Child Fatalities from Religion-Motivated Medical Neglect," *Pediatrics*, vol. 101, Issue 4, 1998.

⁴² For gradually changing attitudes in this area see: Justine Goba and Nisbert T. Taringa, "Rewriting the Sacred Script: Johanne Marange Apostolic Church (JMAC) and Development in Zimbabwe," in James Amanze et al, *Religion and Development in Southern and Central Africa*, vol 1, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2019, chapter 27.

for orphans among others, some people still argue that religion is a double-edged sword, which incites violence. The Old Testament for example, expresses a clear instruction that witchcraft is an offence punishable by death. Exodus 22:18 says "Do not allow a sorceress to live." This may be very harmful to a society and the statement has an element of violence.

Although religion is perceived by some to be harmful to individuals and to the society, there are, however, positive arguments that it is not harmful. Research suggests that religious people are happier and less stressed.⁴³ Surveys have concluded that spiritually committed people are twice as likely to report being "very happy" than the least religiously committed people.

Religion as an Agent for Democracy and Reconstruction of Society

Ali Mazrui has argued that in the final two decades of the 20th century Africa has been going through the "Second Liberation."⁴⁴ If the first liberation struggle was against alien rule, the new crusade is for African democracy. If the first liberation was for political independence, the second is for wider human rights. If the first endeavor was for collective self-determination, the second liberation is for individual fulfillment. Africa fought very hard for decolonization in the first crusade; it remains to be seen if Africa will fight equally hard for democratization in the second challenge.⁴⁵

⁴³ K. Ward, "Is Religion Dangerous?," citing David Myers, *The Science of Subjective Well-Being*, Guilford: Guilford Press, 2007, p. 156.

⁴⁴ A.A. Mazrui, *The African Condition: A Political Diagnosis*, Cambridge University Press, 1980.

⁴⁵ Walter Rodney, *Walter Rodney Speaks: The Making of an African Intellectual*, Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1990.

Many religious leaders such as Desmond Tutu, Banana, and Muzorewa have made moves to significantly influence a democratic society, advocating for African countries to be just and fair in their thinking and ideologies of running nations. Idowu and Chitando also talk of indigenization theologies and express the need for the church to think outside of a colonialist mindset.⁴⁶

Many African economies are submerged under the deluge of globalization, mismanagement, corruption and a litany of other problems.⁴⁷ Poverty, extreme human rights violations and civil unrest appear to have attained permanent resident status in Africa. According to values of true development of humanity, such prevailing conditions in Southern Africa tend to make humans less human. It points to the effect that true development of humanity is absent in the region. The core values of true development, sustenance, self-esteem and freedom from servitude seek to make a society 'more human' through religious education and good governance.

Some African political leaders are quick to dismiss ideas like 'human rights,' 'good governance,' and 'democracy' and others as concepts of Western glamour that are of no relevance to the lives of millions of contemporary Africans.⁴⁸

According to Ezra Chitando, Mugabe argued that these were ideological smokescreens used to gloss over neo-colonialism. With authoritative anti-colonial rhetoric, Mugabe wondered whether the West can teach Africa any lessons about democracy and human rights. Can perpetrators

⁴⁶ E.B. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition*, London: SCM Press, 1973; Ezra Chitando, "Stop Suffering: An Examination of the Concepts of Knowledge and Power with Special Reference to Sacred Practitioners in Harare," *Religion and Theology*, 2000.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 128.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 136.

of the slave trade and colonialism claim to be paragons of human rights? Can those who “bomb democracy” into Afghanistan claim to be champions of democracy?⁴⁹

Chitando further shows that some leaders argue instead of developing. Africa is littered with grandiose blueprints, while the seers continue to see a new continent. Unfortunately, impressive plans remain locked up in office cabinets due to several factors, including the refusal by most politicians to entertain new ideas.⁵⁰ African political elites have tended to monopolize power and frustrate technocrats. They wait for external players to bring their developmental agendas to fruition. As Africans, reconstruction theology should remind us that we are our own liberators and that the challenges of society’s progress cannot be outsourced.

To this end, there is need for hard work towards the construction of a living environment for the survival of future generations. In this regard, inhabitants of Southern Africa anticipate a situation whereby children are left a harmonious society founded on the recognition of the dignity of each person, where transparency and honesty prevail and where attention is given to the weak and the most vulnerable.

Conclusion

To some extent, it may be concluded that religion has had many positive impacts on development, but there are also negative aspects that are found embedded in religion such as the harm it may do to individuals and society. The impact of religion on development is an ongoing process, and it is our belief that there cannot be any meaningful development in Southern Africa without serious recourse to the religious beliefs and practices of the people.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 141.

Chapter 16

Religious Education and Civic Responsibility in Malawi: A Historical Perspective

Jonathan Nkhoma

Introduction

The history of religious education in Malawi, especially for the past thirty or forty years, has not been a successful one. Attempts at RE syllabus reforms have not yielded the intended results. It is further observed that in the same period of rapid RE decline, the sense of civic responsibility among the majority of Malawians has been on the decline as well, despite the introduction and presence of democratic institutions in recent years. The chapter then argues that this is not a mere coincidence. The decline in the sense of civic responsibility is to a large extent a consequence of the very unstable manner in which religious education has been offered in our schools in recent decades and its failure to deliver its civic-oriented goals. This decline in both religious education and civic responsibility has created a moral vacuum that has led to the loss of integrity among many citizens and the rise of corruption across the Malawian social fabric. The thesis of the chapter is that a better approach to religious education would lead to a reclamation of religious values that had formed the basis for civic life at the dawn of Christianity in Malawi and to a reduction of corruption in public and civic life.

Currently, the state of corruption in Malawi is dire. According to Global Corruption Barometer 2016 Survey, 13% of service users in Malawi paid

a bribe in 2016.¹ Perception of corruption was highest for the Office of the President and Cabinet (43%), the Police (39%), business executives (35%), Government officials (34%), traditional leaders (30%), tax officials and Members of Parliament (27%). About 62% of people thought that corruption had increased in 2016.² Examples of major corruption scandals include Field York, Cashgate and Maizegate.

Religious Education

Colonial Period: 1875-1964

The tale-telling of religious stories, an important part in RE, does have a great impact on the formation of moral and ethical character.³ The strong

¹ Global Corruption Barometer 2016 Survey.

² Literature on the state of corruption in Malawi abounds. For example, Peter J. Phiri, "Understanding Corruption in Malawi: Sources of Corruption and Constraints on Anti-corruption Programmes (1994-2004), University of the Witwatersrand, 2013; Jeremy B.K. Sandbrook, *The Corruption Chameleon: A Case Study of Corruption within a Malawian NGO*, MPhil, Massey University, 2012; Blessings Chinsinga et al, "Governance and Corruption Survey 2010, Final Report," Centre for Social Research, University of Malawi, 2010; Joseph J. Chunga and Jacob Mazalale, "Is Malawi Losing the Battle against 'Cashgate'?" *Afrobarometer Dispatch*, no. 149, 2017, pp. 1-8; "Capital Hill Cashgate Scandal," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capital_Hill_Cashgate_Scandal; Daniel D. Daka, *Challenges to the Successful Implementation of Anti-corruption Measures: The Case of Political Corruption in Malawi*, LLM, University of the Western Cape, 2013; "Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2016," Transparency International 2016; Regson Chiweza et al., "Malawi Afrobarometer Round 6 Survey Results," Paper presented at Victoria Hotel, Blantyre, 20 August 2014.

³ Bade Ajuwon, "Education and Threats to Community Values: The Yoruba Example," in Joyce A. Ladner and Segun Gbadegesin (eds), *Ethics, Higher Education and Social Responsibility*, Washington DC: Howard University Press, 1996, pp. 139-140.

Christian influence on Malawian society rooted in this period cannot be denied.⁴ During the colonial period, education in general was geared to promote Western values. Religious education meant BK (Bible Knowledge). It was designed to instill moral discipline, self-control and civic responsibility. The telling of Biblical stories, of Biblical worldviews and philosophies was responsible for the formation of the moral fabric of Malawian society throughout the colonial period.

The earliest Christian missions that came to Malawi to open up the land of the lake to the Gospel, never abandoned Dr David Livingstone's appeal to improve and transform African societies in this area through Christianity and commerce. Thus, from the very dawn of the Malawi nation, Christianity was seen as a tool for preparing African societies for future civil responsibilities. The Presbyterian missions of Livingstonia and Blantyre are vivid examples of Christian missions that saw their work not only as a means for spiritual salvation but also as a means to prepare Africans for civic responsibilities not only in the Church but also in the colonial economy as a whole. The vision of David Clement Scott at Blantyre mission was to create an African church, managed by an African leadership. African students and elders were involved in mission work, especially reaching out to villages to establish churches. As the local African leadership managed these missionary outposts, they were also learning how to manage civic responsibilities as leaders in the fast mushrooming village schools and churches. There was a deliberate move

⁴ Moses Khombe Banda, "Influence of Protestant Churches on Public Education in Malawi," *International Handbook of Protestant Education*, pp. 361-370 [361], <https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-007-2387-018> [5.9.20 17].

to equip the African leadership with skills and values that would later support civic responsibilities.⁵

Similarly, Dr Robert Laws of Livingstonia Mission saw the mission school and the work of the mission not only as a means for spiritual salvation but also as a tool for inculcating among the African students leadership, skills, attitudes and values that would prepare them for civic responsibility:

Livingstonia offered to a limited elite educational and bureaucratic opportunity of a type closed to those in government service at least up to the 1950s. Through the network of church courts, pastors and elders gained first-hand experience in the practicalities of local self-government, keeping minutes and running committees.⁶

Robert Laws also held the view that denying Africans legitimate instruments for political expression would create a conducive social-political environment for a political radicalism, which the missions would find difficult to contain. He therefore encouraged open and critical discussion of issues of national concern by assisting in the formation of the “reading room,” a public forum where graduates of the mission school would come to read about current affairs and discuss issues for presentation to government for action.

At the mission schools, Laws’ pedagogical approach and the content of his lectures further reveal the missionary goal of training students for civic responsibilities. Students were encouraged to form various debating clubs. In the literary societies students could openly and critically

⁵ Andrew C. Ross, *Blantyre Mission and the Making of Modern Malawi*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996, pp. 150-152.

⁶ John McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi 1875-1940: The Impact of the Livingstonia Mission in the Northern Province*, 2nd edition, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000, p. 301.

debate such topics as “the nature of education or the future of Africa”⁷ or “the development of native trade and industry,” or “the legal system and the need for penal reform.” In the Normal Course, Laws and others would lecture on such topics as “the development and function of government ... the use of money, the evil of debt.”⁸ The lectures on civic affairs were designed to help students “think more deeply and widely of the responsibility laid upon them as Christian teachers and leaders of their fellow countrymen from barbarism to civilization.”⁹ The students’ knowledge of the Bible as an independent source of authority also gave them a “critical cast of mind” over everything that they heard in the debates and lectures.

It is important to note that civic lessons could be drawn not only from the Bible but also from other fields of study like history, literature and biographies. For instance, the biblical emphasis on the equality of all men before God could provide material for critiquing the inequalities that were inherent in the colonial system between the “rulers” and the ruled. Civic lessons could also be drawn from the history of the emancipation of American slaves, a favourable topic for Edward Bote Manda, one of the teachers, as well as the biographies of famous men like Joan of Arc. Edward Bote Manda would argue that the colonial structure was imperfect and that only African pressure would trigger its reformation.¹⁰

Such civic lessons were not completely abandoned by the other Christian missions as they all looked forward to a day when African Christians would take full responsibility for the affairs of the Church. It is therefore misleading to argue in general terms that the Christian missions saw

⁷ Ibid., p. 192.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 193-194.

evangelization as the “only” goal for missionary education and that their pedagogical approaches were almost always confessional and non-critical, as many scholars of RE argue.

From 1875, when RE began, to 1926 when a government Department of Education was established, all schools were run by the various Christian missions. Each mission had their own policy. The missions scrambled to open as many schools as possible because a school was also viewed as a tool for evangelism in this period. Following the establishment of the Department of Education, an education policy was formulated to regulate the standards of education and to get rid of denominationalism from the education sector. Christian missions continued to be proprietors of many of the schools and continued to provide a major share of financial support.

As a subject within the context of the modern Malawian school system,¹¹ the context of modern education, RE began in the 1940s with the establishment of the first secondary school. The first was Blantyre Secondary School, established in 1941 by the Protestant Churches, led by the Presbyterian Church who made it clear that RE should be based on the Old Testament, New Testament and the Nicene Creed. In 1942, Zomba Catholic Secondary School was established by the Roman Catholic Church who also insisted that teaching resources should include church instruments like the Catechism. It is important to distinguish these secondary schools whose aim was primarily academic from the “village church schools” whose primary aim was evangelism. In the 1950s and 1960s the number of secondary schools increased and RE was always a part of the school curriculum.

¹¹ RE as a subject was first integrated into overall educational curricula soon after the formation of the Department of Education in 1926, fifteen years before the first modern secondary school was established.

Although some scholars have argued that the status of RE remained poor in this period because most teachers were “non-specialists,” it is important to note that many of the teachers were priests and missionaries who were trained theologians. It is also important to remember that the secondary schools were aware that they were training a new generation of leaders that would soon take up leadership positions in church, government and private sector. The general aim therefore was not to “evangelize” them but to help them develop skills, attitudes and values that would make them responsible Christian and civic leaders. To argue that RE was simply confessional and non-critical because it was based on one religion, namely Christianity, does not do justice to these broader educational aims. Indeed, it was graduates of these schools who assumed leadership roles at the dawn of Malawian independence, a leadership that was dedicated, critical and responsible. It was this generation of leaders that fought for independence and laid down the foundation stone of the Malawian Republic.

Independence Period: 1964-1994

Malawi became self-governing in 1963, and achieved its independence in 1964. In 1966, it became a Republic. This was an era of educational expansion in all its sectors, primary, secondary, technical and tertiary, crowning it all with the establishment of the University of Malawi in 1965. As a matter of priority, government intensified its drive to rid the educational system all vestiges of denominationalism. Control of all schools and education policy was turned to the Ministry of Education, although churches remained proprietors of most schools throughout the country.

Muslims could no longer be excluded from any school based on religion. Government built several schools in Muslim dominated areas. Muslims were also granted freedom to provide Islamic instruction to pupils of

their faith at some time each week.¹² In this era, education was now viewed as an agency for the promotion of national unity and cultural heritage. It was believed that mass education would stimulate the economy, raise the standards of living, eradicate illiteracy and address the staffing needs in government, commerce, and industry.

It was in this period that the first comprehensive national education plan called Educational Development Plan was developed to cover the period 1973-1980.¹³ This development was partly in response to what was happening in East and Southern Africa where the young independent nations were also reforming their educational curricula to address their emerging needs.

This process culminated into the formulation of comprehensive curricula for both primary and secondary schools of which RE was a part. In the education service review of 1988 by the Ministry of Education several weaknesses in the “old” syllabus, that is, the syllabus that resulted from the work of EDP I (1973-1980), were identified.¹⁴ With regard to RE, work to revise the curriculum and all syllabuses for primary school had already begun in 1985. The new RE syllabus for primary schools was to be implemented in phases beginning October 1991 and to finish by 1998. The civic character of the objectives of the new primary school RE syllabus is clear. RE was to take a role in national building. It was believed that RE would enable people overcome religious prejudice, avoid bigotry and fanaticism, promote unity, and accept and respect each other despite differences in their religious views. Teaching was to be

¹² Jessica O. Jarhall, *A Look at Changes in Primary Religious Education in Malawi from a Swedish Perspective*, Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press, 2001, p. 31.

¹³ Ibid, p. 24.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 29, for a detailed discussion.

open to pupils of other faiths.¹⁵ RE was expected to promote such civic values as respect, tolerance, cooperation and other religious and moral principles that would help in building a harmonious nation.¹⁶

The new RE syllabus was no longer based on a single religion, in this case Christianity. It was a multi-faith syllabus based on the three “major” religions in Malawi, identified as Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion. Thus, the independence period was mainly a transitional and formative period when the early syllabus was subjected to a critical review and a new one put in place. One of the main reasons for change from a single faith tradition to a multi faith tradition as a basis for the new curriculum was to address the concern that Muslims felt alienated by the old RE syllabus with its Christian bias. It was hoped that the incorporation of Islam and African Traditional Religion into the RE syllabus would promote an understanding of the traditional cultural and religious heritage as a basis for cultural harmony at national level, and at the same time provide for a wider integration by creating a primary school system that was not only open to all pupils but also provided a platform for religious dialogue through discussions of the different religions. It will be shown below that the well-intended civic goals of the new primary school RE syllabus have failed to materialize due to the fate that often attends such multi faith syllabuses when the local social-political and religious landscape is not fully accounted for.

At the secondary school level, the “old” RE syllabus continued to apply, following the single religious tradition, which in this case meant the Christian BK syllabus. The turning point would be reached, however, in

¹⁵ Jessica O. Jarhall, *A Look at Changes in Primary Religious Education in Malawi*, p. 31.

¹⁶ *Primary School Teaching Syllabus: Religious Education*, Domasi: MIE, p. xvi.

2000, when government attempted to replace BK with RME.¹⁷ These issues will be discussed below as they fall under the multiparty democracy era in our scheme of historical periodization. It should be noted, however, that BK, though an elective subject at secondary level, was an examinable subject and that pupils took it to achieve an academic credit. As an academic subject, it was open to all pupils and maintained a certain level of critical thinking and reflection. Confessionalism is never stated as an aim in its syllabus although some faith communities, both Christian and non-Christian, tend to think that this is the case, a factor that feeds into the perceived Christian bias of its syllabus.

Generally, in the independence period, RE was maintained in both primary and secondary school curricula although emphasis was now on secular education where Christians, Muslims and Traditionalists could be easily accommodated.

Multiparty Democracy Period: 1994-Present

In 1993 Malawi held a referendum on the re-introduction of a multi-party system, followed by multi-party General Elections in 1994, marking the end of the one-party rule of the independence era. The cracks in the RE glass ceiling became more visible and more pronounced in this period. The new primary school RE syllabus was found to have inconsistencies and contradictions at the levels of both theory and practice.

To begin with, the syllabus and the other teaching materials provide different definitions of religion. A critical analysis of these definitions points to different pedagogical approaches. For example, one definition follows Ninian Smart's definition of religion which pedagogically suggests that the three religions will be presented in terms of their similarities and divergences. The other definition suggested in the syllabus is

¹⁷ Religious and Moral Education.

that religion is about “how people have found meaning and value in life.” Pedagogically, this definition suggests that the teaching process will deal with the questions that the children have and how answers to them have been found. Yet the pedagogical approach taken in the syllabus is a thematic one, an approach that does not deal with questions about life but rather concerns itself with phenomenology of religion,¹⁸ with its focus on *teaching about religion*. This confusion suggests lack of methodological clarity at the conceptual level of the new RE syllabus.

The thematic approach chosen by the syllabus is repetitive through the years. The pupils learn the same themes every year. There is no structured path to guide teachers in their presentation of the material. In addition, teaching three religions at an equal level of depth and breadth requires that the teachers possess an equal depth of knowledge in each of them. Practically, however, most teachers are Christians, with some knowledge of Islam and very little knowledge of African Traditional Religion. This imbalance in the depth of knowledge that RE teachers possess makes it difficult, if not impossible, to give equal weight to the three religions.

Another complication arises in the classification of African Traditional Religion as one of the major Malawian religions and as one separate and independent from Christianity and Islam. African Tradition Religion is deeply embedded and intertwined with the local culture. It is practically extremely difficult to separate it from the Malawian cultural heritage. There is no Malawian community that identifies itself as members of African Traditional Religion. Yet the traditional beliefs from the so called African Traditional Religion underlie the whole of Malawian

¹⁸ Jessica O. Jarhall, *A Look at Changes in Primary Religious Education in Malawi*, p. 46.

society, whether Christian, Muslim or otherwise. This phenomenon has not escaped scholarly attention.

Andrew Walls makes the following observation:

For one thing, primal religions underlie all the other faiths, and often exist in symbiosis with them, continuing ... to have an active life within and around cultures and communities influenced by those faiths.¹⁹

He further observes:

What we call for convenience 'religions' are not in any case self-contained, mutually exclusive entities which can be adopted or exchanged at will. From the standpoint of the believer or the community of believers there is bound to be a continuum of perception and experience ... The influence of primal world views thus continues long after adhesion takes place to Christianity or Islam... [They have] continuing effect ... within communities whose consciousness is formed by another faith usually Christianity or Islam.²⁰

Walls here is speaking about an intricate absorption of much of the "configuration of primal religions" into Christian and Islamic communities, among others. This makes it extremely difficult to isolate African Traditional Religion from Christianity, Islam or the Malawian culture. As a result of these problems and challenges, the primary school RE syllabus has persistently failed to deliver its well-intended moral and civic goals as stated in its objectives.

Similar challenges have faced the secondary school RE curriculum with similar consequences.

Like in the case of the new primary school RE syllabus, the new secondary school RE syllabus was developed in the context of the second

¹⁹ Andrew Walls, "Primal Religious Traditions in Today's World," in Frank Whaling (ed), *Religion in Today's World: The Religious Situation of the World from 1945 to the Present Day*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987, pp. 250-251.

²⁰ Ibid, pp. 250-251.

education plan, the Education Development Plan II (1985-1995). The same three religions: Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion had been identified. In 1998, the RME syllabus was produced for the secondary schools. Its topics included values, ethics, contemporary moral issues, gender equality, among others. In January 2000, Government rolled out the new multi-faith RME syllabus to replace the BK syllabus.

In 1991, Government had successfully replaced BK in the primary school RE syllabus. By 1999, Government had introduced the multi-faith RE syllabus to all primary school classes, standards 1 to 8. When it moved to introduce the new multi-faith RE syllabus to the secondary school level, it faced unexpected resistance.

To appreciate the widespread rejection of the new multi-faith RME syllabus, it is important to know that the framers of the new multi-faith RE syllabuses were guided by international trends, especially in Western countries where adoption of a multi-faith RE curriculum had become common due to considerations about democracy, liberalism, globalization and the recognition of cultural and religious heterogeneity.²¹ A classroom in the Western countries is typically diverse. It could consist of pupils from very different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. The background could, for example, be Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, in all their different variations and expressions.²²

²¹ Yonah H. Matemba, *A Comparative Study of Religious Education in Scotland and Malawi, with Special Reference to Developments in the Secondary School Sector, 1970-2010*, PhD, Glasgow University, 2011, p. 1.

²² Kelvin Williams, Helle Hinge, Bodil Liljefors Persson, "Religion and Citizenship Education in Europe," in *Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe: Guidelines on Citizenship Education in a Global Context*, no. 5, 2008, pp. 1-17,[1].

In Southern Africa, especially Malawi, however, society is still more homogenous. According to the 2008 census, Christianity is the dominant religion in Malawi with 82.7% of the total population, followed by Islam with 13% of the population. 4.3% is shared by others which include Baha'i, Hindu, Sikh, Rastafarian, Jewish, Buddhist and African Traditional Religion.²³ Clearly a multi-faith RE syllabus would not be easily welcome in such a religious landscape. It has been noted that “wrenching policies” often leads to unintended consequences. In a democracy, for any policy on education to succeed, it must have the support of society. Its attitudes, beliefs and perceptions need to be taken into account.²⁴ The framers of the new RE curricula for both primary and secondary schools were sensitive to global developments but failed to appreciate the local context in which such curricula could be implemented.

Forced to abandon the multi-faith RE syllabus, Government, as a compromise, decided to introduce a duo mode in 2001. Duo mode means that instead of having the multi-faith RME replace the mono-faith BK, Government allowed the two syllabuses to run side by side. In practice, the two subjects are not often offered side by side at the same school. Instead, the community around the school, through its school committee, decides which one of the two is to be offered at the school.²⁵ A random sampling of the secondary schools revealed that BK remains the favourite. While all the schools sampled reported that they offer BK, none of them reported that they offer RME. One school reported that Muslim students take BK and “they like it.”²⁶

²³ Yonah H. Matemba, *A Comparative Study of Religious Education*, p. 4.

²⁴ “The Slippery Road of Religious Education,” <http://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/01/chapters1-2.pdf> [8.10.2013].

²⁵ Int. Ntchisi, 29.8.2017.

²⁶ Int. Mzuzu, 4.11.2017.

The introduction of a duo mode RE curriculum has created further complications which makes it impossible to achieve its well-intentioned and civic-oriented goals of national unity and cultural harmony. RME and BK are perceived to have oppositional binaries. BK, which is a mono-faith RE subject, is confessional and non-critical. RME, which is a multi-faith RE subject, is viewed as non-confessional and critical. These binaries have created conflict and contradictions at the various levels of the RE educational process. At the stakeholder level, supporters of each RE subject have engaged in conflicting ideological struggles to carve for themselves some space in the hotly contested RE curriculum. The duo mode represents two oppositional spaces, accommodating competing ideologies and demands about what needs to be taught as RE. At the policy level, the duo mode creates a power struggle as the two sides seek to claim their space on the RE curriculum. Thus, in terms of policy, the duo mode contradicts the very national goals of unity, tolerance and dialogue of difference it seeks to promote. At the school level it creates an apartheid context of “us” and “them” as pupils divide themselves into the opposing RE camps.²⁷

At the level of pedagogy, the duo mode also creates educational contradictions ontologically, epistemologically and methodically. Given the religious history of Malawi and its social-political context, BK is ontologically perceived as appropriate. Epistemologically and methodically, however, it is argued that it promotes an exclusivist approach and uses closed methods of teaching and learning religion. Such methods hinder dialogue across differences as no room is provided to discuss RE content from other religions.²⁸

²⁷ Reshma Sookrajh and Macloud Salanjira, “Ideological Posturing and National Curriculum Policy: Exploring Duo Mode Religious Education for Secondary Schools in Malawi,” *Alternation*, Special Edition 3, 2009, pp. 75-77.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 76.

RME is viewed in a much more positive light. The RME syllabus, ontologically conceptualizes RE as a subject that is based on many religions whose content is taken as valid truths in their own right. Epistemologically, RME is perceived as promoting critical knowledge and understanding of religion, an important dimension of human and social life. Methodologically, RME supposedly employs methods that promote open discussion of RE content drawn from many religions. In this way RME cultivates dialogue across difference.²⁹

Practically, however, RME does not measure up to this ideal picture. The challenges outlined above cast a dark shadow upon RE in both its multi-faith and duo form of expressions. The result is that the RE reforms have failed to yield the fruitful result of turning RE into a useful tool in civic education to promote a sense of civic responsibility among the Malawian citizenry.

Removing RE from the educational curricula and the schools is not a solution as this would remove a critical component of civic education. Although RE in Western democracies has been slowly downgraded in favour of liberal democratic values over the past forty years, the civic role of RE in the public space is becoming increasingly clear since the unfortunate terrorist attack on the twin towers on 11 September, 2001, in the City of New York in the United States of America.

This unfortunate event stimulated reflection, across the globe, on the role of religion in the public space. There is now a growing recognition that the public role of religion needs to be recognized and studied to understand better the relationship between religion and civic life.

Religious values influence politics by providing ultimate values with which our more mundane political compromises can be compared and evaluated. Religion is an important source of transcendent values,

²⁹ Ibid.

which may inform our political judgments ... If authentic religion or authentic democracy are to be realized, religion and politics must interact through a distinct, yet porous border.³⁰

Banning of religion in public spaces and institutions, as it is the case in the United States of America, and to a lesser extent, in France and Turkey,³¹ frustrates intercultural dialogue between people of different religious traditions and often leads to exclusion. When religious truth is not subjected to an open debate within a classroom, pupils form their religious views without an appropriate pedagogical guidance. Religious discourse in the public space is then hijacked by voices that promote a sense of unreasoning and sanctimonious righteousness. This in turn creates a religious context that is favourable to the rise of fundamentalism and fanaticism that may breed terrorism.

There is now a growing awareness that the skills, attitudes, and values that the major religions promote are compatible with the skills, attitudes, and values that Western democracies seek to promote. For example, in recommendation 1720 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, it is argued that religion should not be “incompatible” with democracy and that both should be valid partners in the pursuit of the common good.³²

There is a general interest to recover the religious roots of civic education. In an earlier version of a proposed European constitution, Europe is said to draw its inspirations from both religious and humanistic traditions. Recommendation 1720 of the Council of Europe further gives

³⁰ Ted G. Jelen, “Religion and Democratic Citizenship,” *Polity*, vol. xxiii. no. 3, 1991, p. 477.

³¹ Kelvin Williams, Helle Hinge, Bodil Liljefors Persson, “Religion and Citizenship Education in Europe,” in *Children’s Identity and Citizenship in Europe: Guidelines on Citizenship Education in a Global Context*, no. 5, 2008, p. 2.

³² Council of Europe, 2005, Clause 5; *Ibid*, p. 7.

three reasons that account for the new attitude towards religion as an important feature of civic understanding. First, it is argued that there is now an enhanced sense of the significance of religion as a cultural phenomenon and as a significant feature of civilization. Religious knowledge is needed, for example, to understand the cultural forms that faith can take in an increasingly secular world. It is also understood that religious knowledge is part of knowledge of history of mankind and that schools must provide it in a critical and non-proselytizing manner.³³

Secondly, it is argued that there is now recognition of the potential of religion as a moral source and as a source of social capital. "Many of the values upheld by the Council of Europe stem from ... values derived from Judaism, Christianity and Islam."³⁴ Religion engenders communal identity which promotes mutual support and help. The moral values from religion that are compatible with liberal democracy include generosity, concern for others, consideration of their interest, willingness to share and cooperate and courage. It is also recognized that civic outreach, whether secular or faith-based, arises from similar commitments.³⁵

And thirdly, and probably most importantly, there is a growing awareness about the need to be able to understand religion as a feature of social diversity. It is recognized that the place of religion in societies that are characterized by diversity needs to be studied. It is argued that RE conducted "with restraint and objectivity and with respect to the values of the European Convention on Human Rights" can help in engendering tolerance and combating fanaticism.³⁶

³³ Ibid, p. 6.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 7.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 8.

³⁶ Council of Europe, 2005, Clause 1; Clause 7, p. 8.

With this developing awareness about the role of religion in the public spaces and institutions, removing RE from the educational curricula is not an option. Yet the Malawian experience with RE is that it has failed to achieve its civic-oriented goals.

Religious education in the form of BK was actively campaigned against in favour of a multi-faith syllabus due to some socio-political factors. In a significant way, the introduction of a multi-faith religious education syllabus militated against the basic moral foundation rooted in Christian education from the colonial period.

Thus, the influence of RE in the form of Bible/Christian education was systematically reduced as the decades passed by, while at the same time RE in the form of the multi-faith RME as well as in its duo mode failed to deliver its civic-oriented results.

Growth of Corruption

As the moral influence of RE in the form of BK declined and as the new RE in the form of multi-faith RME faced tremendous setbacks, corruption grew increasingly during various eras.

During Colonial Period: 1875-1964

This period saw the whole education system, which was mainly Christian, inculcating an aspiration for high moral standards and integrity. To be Christian meant to adhere to these high moral standards. However, the authority to control national resources and other public goods was vested in the hands of either missionaries or the colonial officers. The moral climate neither allowed nor favoured corruption among the African peoples. Africans mostly worked at menial levels without much controlling authority over resources.

During Independence Period: 1964-1994

The moral climate created in the missionary/colonial period among Africans spilled over into the independence period. The political system which was dictatorial put everyone, black or white, under state surveillance, monitoring individuals at all levels with regard to the manner in which they were acquiring wealth.

Despite this, a few members of the politburo and their families amassed wealth. These were the sacred cows of the independence era. They were shielded by the political system and let free through the culture of fear.

While corruption began to appear in this era, it was primarily limited to those who were in the highest positions of power. Corruption in this era only had minimal impact on national resources.

During Multiparty Democracy Era: 1994-Present

The introduction of multiparty democracy in 1994 disrupted the moral fabric of the nation by deliberately removing or ignoring all principles and rules on which the culture of integrity rested.

As the political and religious pillars of society crumbled, a culture of disrespect and disdain for rules and regulations filled the moral gap, creating a conducive environment for corruption to thrive.

In addition, an active attempt to limit the influence of Christian education was made at the highest political level. BK, which is essentially a Christian education school subject, was removed from primary teachers training college curriculum in 1987 and from primary school curriculum in 1991. Government removed it from the secondary school curriculum in 2000, to be replaced by multi-faith RE curriculum in the form of RME. Yonah Matemba, who is generally sympathetic to the introduction of a multi-faith RE syllabus in Malawi, also notes the difficulty of such a

process in a context where one faith is predominant, especially in the rural areas:

Even in those countries where new approaches are being tried, there is some unwillingness to make wholesale changes throughout the school system. In some instances, this state of affairs is precipitated not by educational policy but by the social-religious situation, which mirrors Christian ideals. This is better illustrated in the Malawian context where largely due in part to the historical Christian influence and for the fact that Christianity is the major religion in the country, multi-faith religious education introduced in schools was opposed.³⁷

Christian schools refused to remove BK as a subject and neglected the multi-faith curriculum that was introduced. Public schools also backed away from removing the BK.³⁸ The two syllabuses were made optional. An institution could offer both and allow students to choose. An institution was also allowed to choose only the syllabus that was in line with their religious tradition.

However, since Malawi is predominantly Christian, most teachers did not like to teach using the multi-faith RE curriculum. In addition, teachers were ill-prepared for the change. There was neither proper training nor orientation. Teaching resources were also scarce if not simply absent.

This confrontation further eroded the moral strength that is inherent in a Christian education system. Society was subtly encouraged to doubt the

³⁷ Jonah H. Matemba, "Religious Education in the Context of sub-Saharan Africa: The Malawian Example," *British Journal of Religious Education*, vol. 31, Issue 1, 2009, pp. 41-51 [41].

³⁸ This resistance to a multi-faith religious education syllabus is not unique to Malawi. It is also true of almost all the southern African countries, a subset of the sub-Saharan Africa, where the Christian faith remains predominant and where the immigration of people of other faiths is so minimal to warrant such a national educational project. This reluctance to adopt a multi-faith approach to religious education in this region generally is also noted by Ibid.

role of Christian education in the formation of a culture of integrity. At the same time, the Malawian society, being predominantly Christian, either neglected or failed to engage with the multi-faith RE syllabus in a way that supports Christian ideals of integrity, good citizenship and good governance.

The result of these developments is that RE, whether single-faith or multi-faith, lost the influence it once had on the formation of moral character that is a necessary background to a responsible civic life. The aim of inculcating civic-oriented RE educational goals did not materialize. Pupils went through primary and secondary school education without preparation for the civic responsibilities they later assumed. This lack of a sense of civic responsibility has created room for untold corrupt practices that are embedded into the very core of Malawian society today.

New Models of Religious Education

Here we observe that three models of RE have emerged in the Malawian context. These are single-faith model, multi-faith model and the duo mode model. Single-faith model is where the syllabus is informed by a single faith like Christianity. Multi-faith model is a curriculum that is informed by more than one religious tradition in equal measure. In the Malawian context, the multi-faith RE syllabus is informed by Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion although the latter is not an organized religion. The duo mode model is constituted by administering both the single-faith BK and the multi-faith RME at the same institution. We have already discussed the challenges and difficulties that have dogged these approaches in Malawi.

In light of the RE history outlined above and in view of the Malawian religious and social-political context, this chapter argues that there is need for a new model of doing RE in Malawi. Given the more homogeneous religious character of the country in that there are only two main

religions, Christianity and Islam, with each of them being a “majority” religion in distinct areas of the country, neither a single-faith model nor a multi-faith model as currently designed will work. There is need to forge a new RE approach that does not only respond to the emerging global issues of democracy, religious and cultural heterogeneity, liberalism and mass migration, but one that also responds in a sensitive manner to the local context characterized by a certain level of cultural heterogeneity and a high level of religious homogeneity.

The RE approach I propose here may be referred to as a “neo-confessional approach”³⁹ for lack of a better term. This is an approach where “religions other than the central ones are recommended to be taught as tolerated extras.”⁴⁰ In this approach, while the content and spirit of the curriculum would be based on a single faith tradition, in the Malawian case Christianity or Islam, references, examples and illustrations could also be drawn from aspects of other religions. In the Malawian context, this suggests the need to develop a fully-fledged RE curriculum based on Islam, parallel to the BK curriculum based on Christianity that already exists. Such an Islamic RE curriculum would allow for an in-depth treatment of the Islamic material to sufficiently address the civic-oriented goals currently available in the multi-faith RE curriculum, but from a more comprehensive Islamic perspective. While Islam as a single faith tradition would be addressed in depth in such a curriculum, illustrative material could also be drawn from Christianity and African Traditional Religion to make the approach more open to a religious dialogue of difference.

³⁹ This approach is mentioned in “The Slippery Road of Religious Education,” <http://repository.up.ac.za/bitstr/01chapters1-2.pdf>, p. 8.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Similarly, the existing BK curriculum would need to be enriched by incorporating aspects of the Islamic faith and African Traditional Religion so that it becomes open to other religious beliefs to encourage dialogue among two (or three) main religious traditions in Malawi. This approach would ensure that the two main religions in Malawi, Christianity and Islam, are fully accounted for in the educational curriculum, while sufficient attention is also given to African Traditional Religion which “underlies all the other faiths, and often exists in symbiosis with them.”⁴¹ Such an approach would effectively address the challenges and contradictions we have highlighted in this study.

This would then ensure that RE delivers successfully its civic-oriented goals through the pedagogical process so that through the study of religion pupils also acquire skills, attitudes and values that eventually shape their moral character into responsible citizens. In this way, RE would be making a significant contribution to the fight against corruption in Malawi.

Conclusion

The chapter concludes that since corruption is embedded so deeply in Malawian society, the most promising way to deal with the problem is to revive and strengthen RE for the youths in both primary and secondary schools. It is only when RE can deliver its civic-oriented goals through the educational curricula that the youths could be assisted in internalizing skills, attitudes and values that are critical to the formation of a civically responsible citizenry. It has further been argued that in the current Malawian context, the existing pedagogical approaches to RE are so fraught with contradictions and challenges that it is not possible to achieve civic-oriented curriculum goals by using them in their current form. The study

⁴¹ Andrew Walls, “Primal Religious Traditions in Today’s World,” in Frank Whaling (ed), *Religion in Today’s World*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987, p. 250.

therefore proposes a new pedagogical approach referred to as the “neo-confessional approach” to address both local and global concerns in RE pedagogy.

Chapter 17

Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child”: Corporal Punishment, Religious Values and the Concept of Development in Zimbabwe

Bernard Kusena

Introduction

For quite some time, Zimbabwe has been grappling with the issue of whether to legalize corporal punishment in schools and homes in tandem with international trends. Justice David Mangota’s landmark 2017 constitutional ruling settled this question by holding that corporal punishment was no longer permissible at law.¹ This followed the case of a primary school teacher who was dragged to court by one Linah Pfungwa, a Harare woman whose child had been beaten. The bold decision which the court promulgated against corporal punishment not only caused a stir among members of the public over the desirability of this law, but also aroused mixed feelings with regards to how children could be disciplined going forward. The general opinion shared by religious organizations, parents, teachers and pupils alike was that there were more advantages to corporal punishment than could be achieved by other disciplinary measures. Others have, however, clamoured for the abandonment of spanking altogether in favour of ‘more modern and progressive’ methods of child discipline.

¹ Unpublished Constitutional Court Ruling, 2017.

This chapter engages with these views by analyzing the rationale behind the abolition of corporal punishment in schools and homes. It examines teachers' and pupils' response to the legal position taken by Zimbabwe's apex court against corporal punishment. The study interrogates the opportunities and threats linked to corporal punishment vis-a-vis alternative disciplinary measures available to parents and teachers. It explores, for instance, biblical teachings on child discipline in order to assess their overall impact on sustainable development.

Background

In all parts of Zimbabwe, it is common that parents and guardians resort to corporal punishment in disciplining children, particularly those within the age range of five to fifteen years. The underlying belief is that the fear of the rod will restrain children from various forms of misdemeanour. Children are generally known to be playful, and in some cases prone to preventable injuries or even death due to playfulness. Children can play around with harmful objects such as knives, broken bottles, fire or dirty water. In other instances, they may play near busy roads or highways, cross dangerous rivers, or wander into prohibited areas like electrical works that may be maliciously harmful. At school, pupils may not engage fully with their school work due to playfulness or laziness. They may also insult teaching and non-teaching staff if they are not sufficiently restrained.

Some of them may even register high rates of absenteeism if mechanisms are not put in place at home and school to check on them. During break or lunch time, pupils may hurt each other through fist fighting and hurling harmful objects at each other over petty issues. Teenage boys and girls may proceed into 'love' relationships which may divert them from concentrating on their school work. Combined, such forms of misbehaviour may result in that type of child who is not morally upright. To this end, custodians of children at various levels are confronted with

the reality of having to deploy various strategies to control such children. This chapter investigates why corporal punishment seems to have been historically the most favoured approach to child discipline in Zimbabwe ahead of other variables.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has defined corporal punishment as “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light.”² This implies that stakeholders have to ensure that attempts to circumvent the full implications of this definition in their administration of discipline would not be permitted as it would be incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention. For purposes of this discussion, corporal punishment has been defined as the punishment of a physical nature, such as caning, flogging or beating. It is a form of physical punishment that involves the infliction of pain as retribution for an offence or for the purpose of disciplining or reforming a wrongdoer. Traditionally, corporal punishment continued to be applied to intentionally inflict physical pain on victims to punish them following a misdemeanour.

Prior to independence in Zimbabwe and shortly afterwards, nearly all schools permitted the administration of corporal punishment to pupils as the most effective means of creating a conducive environment of discipline, critical to the teaching and learning process. From a set of interviews held with educators and ordinary parents, it was revealed that many people were still confident with this method.³ “Discipline in schools and homes has sharply deteriorated because of the absence of the stick and we are heading for disaster,” argued one interviewee. “*Wangu mwana ndinobinha*” (“I beat my own child thoroughly!”), declared the

² United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, UN: Geneva, 1989.

³ Group Interviews Involving Teachers and Parents, Betera Primary School, Mutare, 10.7.2017.

parent.⁴ It appears that more than half the respondents that were interviewed echoed these sentiments. This implies that the ruling against corporal punishment must have been ‘imposed’ on the people against their will and that an urgent amendment is required. Many of the respondents admitted that some shortfalls were common in corporal punishment such as beating to death or inflicting injuries on victims, but they still insisted that, notwithstanding such possibilities, corporal punishment was the way to go.

Interestingly, all supporters of corporal punishment seemed to have been backed by various bible verses. From the interview conducted with the Zion Apostolic Church leaders in Epworth, there was emphasis to the effect that corporal punishment was approved by God.⁵ Several biblical snippets were cited which included the following: Proverbs 13:24; Proverbs 23:13-14 (Don’t fail to discipline your child); Proverbs 13:24 (Whoever does not discipline his son hates him, but whoever loves him is diligent to correct him); Proverbs 22: 15 (A child’s heart has a tendency to do wrong, but the rod of discipline removes it far away from him); Proverbs 22:6 (Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it); Proverbs 29: 15 (A rod and reproof impart wisdom, but a child who is unrestrained brings shame to his mother); Proverbs 29:17 (Correct thy son, and he shall give you rest, he shall give delight unto thy soul).⁶

While some of these verses do not prescribe the most appropriate form of punishment applicable to defaulting children, impliedly corporal punishment is the tool of first choice among parents. Many religious leaders “make connections between firm discipline and a child’s spiritual well-being, and encourage parents to use corporal punishment as an

⁴ Int. Sarudzai Maseru, Mukwada Village, Ward 29, Marange [15.7.2017].

⁵ Int. Pastor Joyline Mogwase, Epworth Zion Apostolic Church, 5.8.2017.

⁶ New Revised Version, 1989.

important part of their discipline repertoire.”⁷ Although Gershoff maintains that the use of corporal punishment to discipline children continues to be one of the last holdouts of old-fashioned child rearing, such a practice persists because of its long-held ties to religion, particularly Christianity.⁸

Relating these biblical narratives to legal provisions enshrined in the country’s constitution and other children’s Acts, presents an interesting problem. Touted as post-colonial Zimbabwe’s most progressive piece of legislation, the 2013 Constitution espouses those values that are important to children. For example, section 19(1) provides that ‘the state must adopt policies and measures to ensure that in matters relating to children, the best interests of the children concerned are paramount.’ Section 19(2) states that “the State must adopt reasonable policies and measures within the limits of the resources available to it, to ensure that children; (c) are protected from maltreatment, neglect or any form of abuse, and; (d) have access to appropriate education and training.”⁹ Indeed, this legal support to the efforts to prohibit corporal punishment has been instrumental in entrenching children’s rights against all forms of violence. These constitutional provisions dovetail with Article 28(2) of the UNCRC which provides that the disciplinary methods deployed by schools should be “consistent with the child’s human dignity” and in conformity with the Convention.¹⁰

⁷ Philip Greven, *Spare the Child: The Religious Roots of Punishment and the Psychological Impact of Physical Abuse*, New York: Random House, 1991.

⁸ Elizabeth T. Gershoff, “More Harm than Good: A Summary of Scientific Research on the Intended and Unintended Effects of Corporal Punishment on Children,” 73 *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 2010.

⁹ The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment, no. 20 Act, 2013.

¹⁰ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), UN: Geneva, 1989.

The country took a step in the right direction by abolishing corporal punishment as it is cruel and degrading. It also causes psychological trauma to the child. The idea was to move away from the rod to adopt other forms of punishment to protect children from a violation of their rights. Legally, the country has demonstrated a strong commitment to reform its laws to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings. What seems to be lacking, however, is the enforcement mechanism. For instance, a survey of headmasters and senior teachers across rural schools showed that corporal punishment was still the main means of disciplining pupils.¹¹ A cross-section of teachers in Harare also echoed these sentiments. It was difficult to discipline pupils without the assistance of the whip. Although this was common in such schools in the high-density suburbs, several other schools in low-density suburbs also still upheld the application of corporal punishment as a tried and tested tool to achieving effective discipline within the school environments.

At home, the subject was topical as well. Following the constitutional ruling against spanking, those parents within the age ranges of forty upwards were almost in agreement that corporal punishment was problematic. Having been subjected to it themselves, they seemed to have been seeing better opportunities in using corporal punishment than any other means of instituting discipline amongst children. For instance, some parents at a United Methodist Church gathering in Mutare indicated that the high level of discipline in their homes was attributed to corporal punishment as provided for in the Bible. It was revealed that such teenage misdemeanours like flirting were curtailed. In addition, children concentrated more on their school work for fear of being beaten

¹¹ The researcher had the opportunity to discuss the subject of corporal punishment with a number of school authorities. There appeared to be fewer, if any, alternatives to corporal punishment for most rural schools.

when they brought poor results.¹² This view was welcomed by many other parents who advocated the reversal of the ban on all forms of corporal punishment as it would pose a threat to good child behaviour already enjoyed in their homes.

Corporal punishment, according to Gershoff, also persists because it is a practice with strong ties to religion, particularly Christianity.¹³ However, the younger parents seemed to be towing a different line of argument altogether. They were of the view that corporal punishment was archaic and dangerous as argued by psychologists. The mother whose child caused the matter of corporal punishment to be revived in the constitutional court is one such example. Teachers were held criminally liable for spanking children at school. At home, such middle-aged parents were uncomfortable with beating children and were ready to mount court challenges to those acting in *loco parentis* to their children if they insisted on corporal punishment. Therefore, on the balance of available evidence, the issue of corporal punishment was still fifty-fifty in terms of whether to allow or to ban it. This chapter, however, argues for the total ban. Having looked at these legalities, it is compelling to examine when and how corporal punishment evolved over time.

Beginning with Sweden in 1979, several other European countries banned all forms of corporal punishment. This trend spread over to different parts of the world and by April 2016, 49 countries had prohibited corporal punishment, including in the family homes, while a further

¹² Focus group discussion with concerned parents at a church meeting in Chikanga, Mutare, 23 July 2017.

¹³ Elizabeth T. Gershoff, "More Harm Than Good: A Summary of Scientific Research on the Intended and Unintended Effects of Corporal Punishment on Children," 73 *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 2010; Philip Greven, *Spare the Child: The Religious Roots of Punishment and the Psychological Impact of Physical Abuse*, New York: Random House, 1991.

54 expressed a commitment towards full prohibition.¹⁴ Before its subsequent amendments in 2016, the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [*Chapter 9:23*], stated in section 241(2) (a) that “a parent or guardian shall have authority to administer moderate corporal punishment for disciplinary purposes upon his or her minor child or ward.” Subparagraph (6) states: “In deciding whether or not any corporal punishment administered upon a minor person is moderate for the purposes of this section, a court shall take into account the following factors, in addition to any others that are relevant in the particular case: (a) the nature of the punishment and any instrument used to administer it; (b) the degree of force with which the punishment was administered; (c) the reason for the administration of the punishment; (d) the age, physical condition and sex of the minor person upon whom it was administered; and (e) any social attitudes towards the discipline of children which are prevalent in the community among whom the minor person was living when the punishment was administered upon the minor person.”¹⁵ Case law has found corporal punishment which causes death and corporal punishment involving burning beyond what is considered “moderate.”¹⁶

Factors that Vitiates Corporal Punishment and Reactions to the Call for its Ban

This study is based on findings from interviews held with a number of professionals such as teachers, legal authorities, education officers, parents, guardians and school pupils. By including students in this research, the idea was to tap from their own appreciation of corporal

¹⁴ “The Global Initiative to End all Corporal Punishment of Children,” 2016.

¹⁵ Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act, (Chapter 9:23).

¹⁶ R. v. Pondo and Anor, 1966, RLR 478 (G) and S. v Walata, HH-84-89, cited in G. Feltoe, Commentary on the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [Chapter 9:23], 2012.

punishment. However, the lifestyles of the parents and guardians differed and these shaped their responses in a very big way. In poshy areas such as Borrowdale, Chisipite and Glenlorne, the prevailing view was that there was no foreseeable advantage in beating children. Their views dovetailed with submissions by the Czech philosopher, theologian and pedagogue, John Amos Comenius, who stressed that a school environment was not supposed to intimidate pupils because of the administration of corporal punishment.¹⁷ When the first attempts were made by the ministry of education to centralize the caning of children to headmasters, boarding masters or matrons and other authorized staff, it was a way of reducing abuse of the practice through excesses. Comenius emphasized that a school should not be a place where children feared to go. This is because he found fault with many of the educational practices of his day. In particular, he disapproved of the scholastic tradition of studying grammar and memorizing texts, in addition to the haphazard and severe teaching methods in European schools which diminished student interest in learning. This is what many respondents from especially the affluent suburbs echoed was the loss of relevance of corporal punishment in the modern day.

In examining the political economy and sociology of corporal punishment, several negative consequences have been raised by psychologists, teachers, social commentators, and other stakeholders who have studied behaviour. For instance, spanking will almost definitely result in the failure by those administering corporal punishment to alter children's

¹⁷ Comenius is best known for his innovations in pedagogy, but one cannot gain an adequate appreciation of his educational ideas without recognizing his religious and metaphysical convictions. Despite the prevalent human suffering of his day, he remained optimistic about the future of mankind, as he believed in the immanence of God and the imminence of God's kingdom on Earth.

behaviour in the long run. Instead, it “amps up their aggression.”¹⁸ These observations dovetail with those raised by Joan Durrant, Psychologist and Professor of Family Sciences at the University of Manitoba, who pointed out the dangers of shaping the child in such a way as to fear.¹⁹ This will go a long way in breeding arrogance amongst grown-ups who know no other remedies except spanking.

It was revealed in one interview that the family had an unshakeable belief that corporal punishment instils the necessary fear against untoward behaviour and this sustains them. For Durrant, hitting children is never a good idea because of the link between spanking and depression and anxiety. When children are physically punished, argues Durrant, “they are at a higher risk of becoming aggressive themselves, because they are seeing a model of that and they are not seeing other ways of resolving aggression and dealing with frustration and so on.”²⁰ She builds on important findings from several works produced by researchers on child discipline who conclude that there are no positive outcomes in administering corporal punishment.²¹ Indeed, physical discipline is slowly declining due to shocking revelations about the lasting harms that the practice has for children.²²

¹⁸ Bonnie Rochman, “Family Matters,” *Time*, 2012. www.apa.org/monitor/2012/04/spanking.aspx.

¹⁹ Joan E. Durrant, *Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting*, 4th ed., Stockholm: Save the Children, 2016.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Michael J. Marshall, *Why Spanking Doesn't Work*, Springville: Bonneville Books, 2002; Philip Greven, *Spare the Child: The Religious Roots of Punishment and the Psychological Impact of Physical Abuse*, New York: Random House, 1991.

²² Brendan L. Smith, “The Case against Spanking, Monitor on Psychology,” vol. 43, no. 4, *American Psychological Association*, 2012.

In the same vein, Sandra Graham-Bermann and others add that “physical punishment can work momentarily to stop problematic behaviour because children are afraid of being hit, but it doesn’t work in the long term and can make children more aggressive.”²³ In fact, the negative effects of physical punishment may not become apparent for some time but the behaviour alters with time until it becomes completely unfavourable.²⁴ These submissions echo conclusions arrived at by researchers who conducted a study on child abuse and neglect in the USA. From the study, it was revealed that corporal punishment had a deleterious effect on behaviour during adulthood. The study “revealed an intergenerational cycle of violence in homes where physical punishment was used.”²⁵ The methodology included interviewing parents and children aged 3 to 7 from more than 100 families. The results showed that children who were physically punished were more likely “to endorse hitting as a means of resolving their conflicts with peers and siblings.” Similarly, parents who had experienced frequent physical punishment during their childhood were more likely to “believe it was acceptable, and they frequently spanked their children,” and that, “their children, in turn, often believed spanking was an appropriate disciplinary method.” However, this view has been contested on the grounds that its proponents have not adequately demonstrated the causal link between physical punishment

²³ S.A. Graham-Bermann, L.E. Castor, L.E. Miller and K.H. Howell, “The Impact of Intimate Partner Violence and Additional Traumatic Events on Trauma Symptoms and PTSD in Preschool-aged Children,” *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, no. 25, 2012, pp. 393-400.

²⁴ Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Report on the Physical Punishment in the United States: What Research Tells Us about its Effects on Children, Columbia, OH: Centre for Effective Discipline, 2008

²⁵ *Ibid.*

and long-term negative effects for children.²⁶ The studies do not “discriminate well between non-abusive and overly severe types of corporal punishment,” concludes Larzelere.²⁷

In addition, spanking negatively affects the sense of self-worth. It erodes the sense of dignity and confidence in adult life. Section 51 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides for the right to human dignity by stressing that “every person has inherent dignity in their private and public life, and the right to have that dignity respected and protected.” In children spanking fosters lying in a desperate attempt to avoid being beaten. In an interview with a teacher with a staunch dislike of corporal punishment, it was revealed that some children were unable to participate in class as a result of the fear to be slapped in the event that they got wrong answers.²⁸ If anything, it actually facilitates the process of the development of negative behaviour among children as they grow older. Children who are guided into becoming responsible citizens that abhor violence in its various forms are likely to come from backgrounds which shun corporal punishment.²⁹

Children who are subjected to corporal punishment not only face risks of physical injury, but also dangers of poor mental health, impaired relationships with parents, as well as weaker internalization of moral values and social behaviour.³⁰ Indeed, research has indicated that spanking could affect areas of the brain which are involved in emotion and stress

²⁶ <http://humansciences.okstate.edu/hdfs/cfr/research-associates/robert-larzelere.html>.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Int. B. Semwayo, Chipindirwe Primary School, Mutare, 9.8.2017.

²⁹ *The Herald*, “Ban on Corporal Punishment Opens New Era for Children,” 25 March 2015.

³⁰ Ibid.

regulation.³¹ In addition to its link with mental-health problems such as depression, anxiety and drug and alcohol abuse, corporal punishment may alter parts of the brain involved in performance on intelligence quotient tests. Children may end up feeling depressed and devalued if harsh punishments are administered upon them. For instance, researchers argue that such children end up lying in a desperate attempt to avoid being spanked.³² To this end, corporal punishment wreaks havoc on the long-term development of children.

Even on the international front, physical discipline is increasingly being viewed as a violation of children's human rights. In 2006, for instance, the UNCRC issued a directive which called for physical punishment, or simply, "legalized violence against children," to be eliminated in all settings.³³ The treaty that established the committee has been supported by many countries which have banned physical punishment of children in all settings, including the home. "Physical punishment doesn't work to get kids to comply, so parents think they have to keep escalating it,"³⁴ says Elizabeth Gershoff. "That is why it is so dangerous," she concludes.³⁵ In her report, Gershoff recommends that parents and caregivers make every effort to avoid physical punishment and she calls for the banning of physical discipline in all American schools. The report has been endorsed by dozens of organizations, including the American

³¹ <http://healthland.time.com/2011/11/04/the-healthland-podcast-spanking-drinking-and-mind-control> [10.8.2017].

³² Ibid.

³³ UNCRC, 2006.

³⁴ Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Report on the Physical Punishment in the United States: What Research Tells Us about its Effects on Children, Columbia, OH: Centre for Effective Discipline, 2008.

³⁵ Ibid.

Academy of Paediatrics, American Medical Association and Psychologists for Social Responsibility.

After three years of work on the APA Task Force on Physical Punishment of Children, Gershoff and Graham-Bermann wrote a report in 2008 summarizing the task force's recommendations. The report called on psychologists and other professionals to "indicate to parents that physical punishment is not an appropriate, or even a consistently effective, method of discipline." "We have the opportunity here to take a strong stand in favour of protecting children," says Graham-Bermann, who chaired the task force.³⁶ In Zimbabwe, the old Constitution allowed for the infliction of moderate corporal punishment on a person below 18 years of age in the home or in execution of a court judgment. It is important to note that only male offenders were subjected to corporal punishment when convicted of a criminal offence. It is also critical to point out that school authorities, acting within the scope of their authority, were allowed to inflict moderate corporal punishment as a way of disciplining a child.

However, the High Court in *S. vs Chokuramba* took a step in the right direction in 2014 and declared that corporal punishment is unconstitutional in terms of the new Constitution. It was then left to the Constitutional Court to confirm or not. The adoption of the new Constitution in 2013 gave birth to a new era in Zimbabwe as regards corporal punishment. The new Constitution does not allow corporal punishment in any form. What this basically means is that a child cannot be subjected to corporal punishment at school, home or as a form of punishment by the courts. This is a welcome development as it recognizes that corporal

³⁶ <http://healthland.time.com/2011/11/04/the-healthland-podcast-spanking-drinking-and-mind-control> [10.8.2017].

punishment is cruel, inhuman and degrading. The development also ensures that there is no discrimination between boys and girls.³⁷

But psychologists would point out that physical punishment could work momentarily to stop problematic behaviour because children are afraid of being hit, but it does not work in the long term and can make children more aggressive. “It is a very controversial area even though the research is extremely telling and very clear and consistent about the negative effects on children,” says Brenda Smith, a psychologist. “People get frustrated and hit their kids. Maybe they do not see there are other options,”³⁸ she concludes. These remarks evidently show that psychologists are generally agreed on the shortfalls of corporal punishment. In Zimbabwe, the picture on the ground shows that a lot more campaign is required to highlight the options available to spanking because of the traditional benefits that corporal punishment has given to parents over time and space.³⁹

Conclusion

Many studies have shown that physical punishment, including spanking, hitting and other means of causing pain, can lead to increased aggression, antisocial behaviour, physical injury and mental health problems for children. Gershoff says all the studies on physical punishment have some shortcomings. “Unfortunately, all research on parent discipline is going to be correlational because we cannot randomly assign kids to parents for an experiment. But I don’t think we have to disregard all research that has been done,” she says.⁴⁰ “I can just about

³⁷ Section 53 of the Constitution, 2013.

³⁸ Brendan L. Smith, “The Case against Spanking: Physical Discipline is Slowly Declining as some Studies Reveal Lasting Harms for Children,” *American Psychological Association*, vol. 43, no. 4, 2012.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Gershoff, 2012.

count on one hand the studies that have found anything positive about physical punishment and hundreds that have been negative.”⁴¹ The court took a step in the right direction and declared that corporal punishment is unconstitutional in terms of the new Constitution. It is now left to the Constitutional Court to confirm or not. As Stuart, et al would put it, studying physical punishment is difficult for researchers in the sense that they cannot randomly assign children to groups that are hit and those that are not.⁴² However, there is a general sentiment within sections of the country’s population that Zimbabwe is not yet sufficiently ready for the banning of corporal punishment, even though they appreciate the possible negative outcomes that spanking may cause. There is need for further research as to how to blend the two extremes between child hitting and complete abandonment of the practice or whether to approach the issue through a gradual process of eliminating corporal punishment.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Stuart N. Hart, Joan Durrant, Peter Newell and F. Clark, *Power, Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline*, Paris: UNESCO, 2005.

Chapter 18

The Quest for Mitigating Environmental Degradation in Zimbabwe: An Exegesis of Ecofeminism

**Milcah Mudewairi, Caroline Dimingu & Henerieta
Mgovo**

Introduction

The destruction of the natural environment in Zimbabwe is so disturbing that the problem calls for mitigating solutions from the four cardinal points. This chapter is targeting the contribution of Ecofeminism to the utilization of the environment in Zimbabwe. The chapter analyses the theories of Ecofeminism with the view of establishing facts to minimize the destruction of the natural environment in Zimbabwe. The chapter will begin by convincing the reader on the need for solutions to environmental degradation in Zimbabwe. The definition and concepts of Ecofeminism will be explored. As the chapter unfolds a critical analysis of Ecofeminist theories will be done and then conclusions drawn on the soundness of these principles.

Background

There are a few indirect publications on the link between the Old Testament and Ecofeminism with special reference to Zimbabwe. There is nearly nothing water tight on the direct application of the Ecofeminists principles to the environmental crisis in Zimbabwe. The ecofeminists are identifying the supremacy of men in patriarchal societies as the driving

force in the destruction of the natural environment. The authors propose an analysis of the Ecofeminist principles in light of the degradation of the natural environment in Zimbabwe. The following literature helped us to identify the gap to be filled by the present study.

The Reality of Environmental Degradation in Zimbabwe

The degradation of the natural environment refers to any change in the condition of the natural environment which reduces its productive potential: quality of the land, especially the top soil, is deteriorating and the vegetation growth and population is affected, there is pollution of the water resources and the extinction of bird and animal species.¹ Environmental degradation is mainly caused by excessive or inappropriate exploitation of the natural resources, especially by human activities that degrade the quality of the natural environment like veld fires, deforestation, water pollution, soil erosion from poor land management like conservation works.² Environmental degradation is also caused by loss of vegetation cover due to overgrazing, overexploitation of the natural environment and deforestation, overgrazing, inappropriate use of marginal land, poaching, illegal mining and unauthorized fishing.³

Effects of the destruction of the natural environment include the increased risk of floods and erosion leading to the washing away of the top soil and the formation of gullies. The loss of soil fertility results in poor crop yields, shortage of local surface water resources, increased levels of ground water, loss of vegetation which plays a major role in determining the biological composition of the soil.⁴ There is need for

¹ "Causes and Effects of Environmental Degradation in Zimbabwe," www.ema.co.zw/index.php.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

more mitigating measures to be put in place so as to reduce the destruction of the natural environment in Zimbabwe since the environment management agency also needs collective support even outside the realm of scientific knowledge and this justifies the consideration of Ecofeminism.

Definition of Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism is one of the newest branches of the feminist movement. It aims to end the abuse of women and to mitigate environmental degradation using the same principles.⁵ Feminism in the context of this chapter is the position that women are oppressed in our society and that such mistreatment should be eliminated.⁶ The above definition implies that women and nature are facing the same predicament of abuse, hence there is need for a syndicated effort to end both the abuse of women and of nature. The perspective of the feminists in line with this literature is the destruction of the environment because of the male mentality of domination witnessed in the oppression of women.⁷ This research will engage in a detailed study with particular attention to the Old Testament, Judaism and African Traditional Religion in tracing the applicability of the feminist principles since these two religions are patriarchal.

Ecofeminism is the position that there are important connections between the domination of women and the domination of nature.⁸ It is very difficult if not impossible to end the exploitation of nature without ending

⁵ Elizabeth Meyer, *The Power and Promise of Ecofeminism Reconsidered*, <http://digitalcommonshonproj/4>, 1994.

⁶ Ibid, p. 4.

⁷ J. Lorber, *The Variety of Feminisms and their Contribution to Gender Equality*, p. 8, diglib.bis.uni-Oldenburg.de/pub/unireden/ur97/kap1.pdf.

⁸ Karen J Warren, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," *Environmental Ethics*, 12/2, 1990, pp. 125-146.

human oppression and vice versa: there is need to close boundaries between humanity and nature as well as male and female and act as if we are one.⁹ Basing on the above definition there is need for syndicate effort to end the abuse of nature that is rampant in our society and is destroying the earth. In short, the ecofeminists are arguing that abuse is the common enemy between the women and nature hence there is need to fight this common enemy.¹⁰ It is from this perspective that this work will trace the applicability of the notion of the feminists so as to map the way forward in the protection of the environment in Zimbabwe.

It is difficult to come up with a single definition of Ecofeminism given that the movement appeared in many versions.¹¹ However, a close consideration of the goals of the radical, cultural and the socialist types of Ecofeminism reveals that they have the common goal of restoring the environment to its original status free from degradation.¹² Ecofeminism is being defined basing on the common purpose hence there is unity in diversity.

Historical Background

Ecofeminists did not appear on the stage from a vacuum. The movement is associated with the Green Belt movement in Kenya. There was severe shortage of fuel in Rural Kenya and Professor Wangari Maathai won the

⁹ Janis Birkerland, "Ecofeminism: Linking Theory and Practice," in Greta Gaard (ed), *Ecofeminism, Women, Animals and Nature*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993, p. 19.

¹⁰ Karen J Warren, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," *Environmental Ethics*, 12/2, 1990, pp. 125-146.

¹¹ Aneel Salman, "Ecofeminist Movement from the North to the South -Pakistan," *Development Review*, 46/4 Part 11, 2007, pp. 853-864.

¹² Karen J Warren, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," *Environmental Ethics*, 12/2, 1990, pp. 125-146.

2004 Nobel Peace Prize for launching a rural tree planting programme.¹³ The noted professor did a splendid job as the launch targeted to reduce deforestation. In Zimbabwe, trees are vital for women since they provide firewood, building material, herbal medicine, shade, facilitating rainfall and beautifying the environment.¹⁴ In the rural areas it is mostly women who walk very long distances in search of firewood carrying babies on their backs. It should be noted that the Green Belt movement created a platform for women to be effective leaders. The step towards reforestation indicates that women in Kenya noted the need for caring of the environment.

The Love Canal group in the United States challenged the larger nuclear power stations for producing toxic substances basing on the notion that it is the women and children who were mostly affected by the hazardous waste evidenced by miscarriages and the birth defects.¹⁵ In this case environmental degradation is being linked to the scientific and industrial revolution in America.¹⁶ It is in these circumstances that for women technology has brought more harm than good. For these women technology is good but there is need for effective environmental management to protect the lives of children and women. The mention of the problems of the waste sites is so disturbing that the women discovered that it is high time women should be actively involved in the environmental control measures since they cannot be spectators amidst the death of nature.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ C. Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution*, San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1980.

¹⁶ Karen J Warren, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," *Environmental Ethics*, 12/2, 1990, pp. 125-146.

The *Chipko* movement in India also paved way for Ecofeminism through the resistance movement in the Himalayan Range as the women threatened to surround the gigantic trees that were to be felled by the tree fellers.¹⁷ It is argued that women are closely associated with nature and are the first to notice and be affected by the shortage of trees.¹⁸ The women realized the importance of trees and that is why the movement decided to protect the trees. The need to protect trees demonstrated how painful it was for these Indian women to lose these trees they knew had surplus benefits to the people. There is need to avoid the random cutting down of trees as they are the livelihood for both the animals and humanity. Trees play a prominent role among these women like fuel, fodder, building material, medicine and many more. In addition, the trees do not grow overnight, hence they should be always protected as they will take long to grow and reach the maturity stage.

It can also be pointed out that the women in Bangladesh contributed a lot to the Ecofeminist movement. The women are very sensitive in terms of environmental protection evidenced by their involvement in the planting of trees. The Bangladesh women vigorously uttered that trees are more reliable than sons to look after their mothers in the future and in the event of the premature death of the husband.¹⁹ For the women in Bangladesh trees are the source of living as they are guaranteed to help humanity like the human beings themselves. The Bangladesh women found it logical to protect the trees since they are their livelihood even after the untimely death of the bread winner.²⁰

¹⁷ Joni Seager, "Earth Follies Feminism," *Politics and Environment*, Island Press, 1993, p. 272.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Aneel Salman, "Ecofeminist Movement from the North to the South Pakistan," *Development Review*, 46/4, part 11, 2007, pp. 853-864.

²⁰ Ibid.

The Pakistan women joined hands in expressing their feelings concerning the poor working conditions experienced by women in industries. Women and children were exposed to hazardous chemicals in the cotton industry since they had no protective clothing and working for abnormal hours.²¹ However, the women and children could not give up this risky job since it was the only mode of survival. The social division of labour disadvantaged women hence the need to protect the environment that can provide for everyone. A group of women marched to the authorities on the need to make the environment friendly for everyone.

Branches of Ecofeminism

Cultural

This group advocates the development of new female cultures since the oppression of women in the societies is linked to male cultures. Nature and gender domination are caused by patriarchal culture; as a result, there is need to trace the relationship between nature and women.²² The argument by the cultural feminists is that patriarchy is the common enemy for both women and nature in terms of abuse. If patriarchal domination is dealt with, women oppression and the exploitation of nature will be a thing of the past. In short, there is a dual problem caused by the cultural male domination. The argument of this school of thought is that the male domination over nature and women is not natural but just cultural, formulated by greedy men to disadvantage women. This cancer should be eradicated as it is causing harm to the environment and the women.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

Social Ecofeminists

These are of the view that patriarchy is the form of hierarchy in the society which is responsible for the chaos and disorder as this is greedy and egoistic.²³ For the society to be egalitarian and function justly there is need to eliminate all forms of hierarchy as these originated from the unjust ideologies meant to oppress women and nature. The social ecofeminists devoted much of their time to carefully analyzing the social structures and they deduced that the domination of men in the societies like those seen in the Old Testament and in African Traditional Religion can be traced from the hierarchical patterns in the society that places man at the top thereby being the ruler of everything.²⁴ As a result, men are in control of everything and they consider all the other things as inferior to them. Thus, nature is being randomly destroyed and there is need to reverse this mentality by doing away with all the traces of hierarchy in society. Once men recognize that women and nature are on equal footing with them, environmental degradation and the oppression of women can be minimized. The starting point for this group is the notion that the inferiority of women in society is linked with their association with nature.

Basic Ideas of Ecofeminism

The basic principle of the ecofeminists is that patriarchy is the root cause of nature and women domination by the society.²⁵ Despite the divisions among ecofeminists, their basic premise is environmental protection. The common denominator for them is to embrace the importance of

²³ Banjeeta Mukherfee, "Eco-feminism: Role of Women in Environmental Management," *Legal Studies*, 1/2, 2013, p. 5.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ling Chen, "The Background and Theoretical Origin of Ecofeminism," *The Journal of Cross-Cultural Communication*, 10/4, 2014, pp. 104-108.

nature and the need to protect it. In addition, the patriarchal societies are causing disequilibrium and destruction in the society because of their domination mentality.²⁶

The ecofeminists are also in agreement on the relationship between nature and women for the reason that rearing and tenderness makes the women naturally to be closer to nature than men.²⁷ The argument for the above issues is that women have more ethics of caring than men, hence they qualify to be the best spokespersons for the interest of nature.²⁸ It is on the basis of such observations that spiritual Ecofeminism is also blaming the patriarchal religions for spearheading the destruction of nature because of male domination in these societies. It is on the patriarchal nature of Old Testament Judaism and African Traditional Religion that this research is grounded in tracing how the domination of men has impacted on the destruction of the environment.

Another common feature of the ecofeminists is that the world is to be an egalitarian society, not a hierarchical structure,²⁹ where the language of dualities has no place, as it can only evolve from the greedy societies full of patriarchal ideas of ruling and domination.³⁰ The world was created so that creatures could enjoy on the same level; however the spirit of domination is resulting in the destruction of nature all in the name of leadership by men and the subordinate status of women.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ R.T. Twine, "Ecofeminism in the Process," www.ecofeminism.orgjournal, 2001, p. 1.

²⁸ Ling Chen, "The Background and Theoretical Origin of Ecofeminism," *The Journal of Cross-Cultural Communication*, 10/4, 2014, pp. 104-108.

²⁹ Ling Chen, "Ecological Criticism Based on Social Gender: The Basic Principles of Ecofeminism," *Higher Education of Social Science*, 7/1, 2014, pp. 67-72.

³⁰ Ibid.

The basic premise of the ecofeminists is that the ideology that authorizes oppression of the minority, the weak and the powerless is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature.³¹ The ideologies are not natural but put in place by the domination of men in the societies as normal. It is high time that the oppression of both women and nature should end since there is a high rate of the destruction of nature due to human negligence. The detrimental effects of the degradation of nature call for an end of this kind of oppression, otherwise the world will turn into a desert.

Janis Birkeland brought a different angle on the ecofeminists when he highlighted that the current environmental crisis is rooted in modern culture, hence there is need for social transformation if we are to preserve life on earth.³² It can be deduced that the philosophical premise is blaming technology on environmental degradation, hence the need to view on the third angle how technology and environment can operate side by side as soul mates. Human beings should not regard themselves as above nature as this has resulted in the destruction of the natural environment. The ethics of reciprocity is the way to go. Women are being praised for their contribution towards the quest for effective environmental preservation and conservation.

There is need to unite the demands of the women movement with those of the ecological movement, hence the need to challenge structures rather than individuals.³³ The dismantling of dualisms and binary oppositions

³¹ Greta Gaard, *Ecofeminism, Women, Animals and Nature*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987, p. 9.

³² Janis Birkeland, "Ecofeminism: Linking Theory and Practice," in Greta Gaard (ed), *Ecofeminism, Women, Animals and Nature*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993, p. 19.

³³ Rosemary R. Reuther, *New Women, New Earth - Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1975, p. 204.

is the only possible avenue for the protection of nature.³⁴ The patriarchal cultural structures witnessed in religions like Old Testament Judaism should be transformed into a society of equals so that they too could recognize the need to care for nature for sustainable development.

Human beings are parasites to nature as evidenced by high consumption and putting little back to restore it.³⁵ The ecosystem can be maintained if women are given the priority of being the managers of ecosystems. Women should never be looked down upon when it comes to the building of a sustainable future for the next generations. The bottom line of the Ecofeminists is the need for interdisciplinary movement to minimize the destruction of nature and to bring an end to women's inferiority complex through discarding the previously alleged male-controlled stereotypes.

Liberation and Domination

For Ecofeminism it has proved difficult if not impossible to liberate nature and women in a society of domination. There is need for men to accommodate the natural differences between male and female as not weaknesses on the part of women and do away with societal ideological burdens justifying the prominent positions of men. The prevailing structures in society have been analyzed to indicate that gender inequalities in the society are not natural but socially constructed by men to rule and dominate their female counterparts.³⁶ The domination of women in Zimbabwe tallies with the Hebrew Bible, since it does not value the position of women to the extent that there are no significant incidents

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ranjeeta Mukherfee, "Ecofeminism: Role of Women in Environmental Governance," *Galgotias Journal of Legal Studies*, 1/2, 2013, p. 1.

³⁶ Mari Mikkola, "Feminist Perspectives on Sex and Gender," Edward N. Zalta (ed), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2017 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/feminism-gender>.

pertaining to the women. It is the women who were considered infertile in the Old Testament and later gave birth promoted the importance of sons. The idea of Ecofeminism can yield good results if applied to the Zimbabwean crisis of the depletion of the natural environment.

Women and Nature Occupy Second Class Positions

In Zimbabwe women are viewed as second class citizens as evidenced by the gender platforms aimed at women empowerment. Women who are in leading positions like politics are very few. In churches like the Roman Catholic Church women cannot be ordained as priests and in most traditional cultures the girl child still lags behind the boy child. For the ecofeminists this mentality of men being superior to women is being extended to the domination of nature hence environmental degradation has engulfed the nation of Zimbabwe. Until the men can recognize women on the same level with them, they will continue to dominate nature hence the need to fight men who are the common enemy for both women and nature. Ecofeminist principles can be applied to end the abuse of nature by human beings. It is high time that in Zimbabwe men should listen to the voices of those who say that there is a need to take care of nature like of our own children.

Men's Domination of the Natural Environment is Causing the Ecological Crisis

It is difficult to liberate nature and women in the societies of domination, especially the patriarchal societies. Zimbabwe is one of the patriarchal societies guided by the principles of Christianity and African Traditional Religion. According to the Zimbabwe Environmental Management Agency, 97% of the causes of ecological destruction is attributed to human beings who are willingly destroying the environment.³⁷ For the

³⁷ "Environmental Management Act," www.ema.co.zw, 2002.

ecofeminists there is no justification for the destruction of the natural environment since it is life sustaining. To vandalize the natural environment as a way of eradicating poverty is not the solution for economic problems. There is need to consider non-violent solutions to economic hardships and Zimbabwe is a case in point. The Ecofeminist principles point out that it is only men who have the spirit of domination evidenced by the patriarchal society, this study reveals that there is need for the Zimbabweans (both male and female) to do away with the spirit of domination as far as nature is concerned. Once people have grasped the notion of them being of equal importance with nature, environmental degradation can be minimized. To argue that it is only men who are dominating the environment is to miss the mark since in Zimbabwe both males and females are equally destroying the environment. It is important to point out that Ecofeminism is not the total solution to the crisis of environment in Zimbabwe although its principles should not be overlooked. The principles of Ecofeminism should not be applied in isolation, thus there is need for multidisciplinary approaches to fight the degradation of the environment in Zimbabwe.

Multiple Factors Leading to Environmental Destruction

There are many factors that contribute to ecological problems in Zimbabwe other than the male domination of the natural environment. Ecofeminism does not discuss other factors that lead to economic squabbles other than those linked to environmental degradation due to male domination. There is need to critically analyze non-male domination factors connected to the destruction of the natural environment, Environmental degradation is also caused by economic growth, population increase, urbanization, intensification of agriculture, rising energy use in transportation, technology and many more.³⁸ Poverty remains the root cause of

³⁸ "Causes of Environmental Degradation," www.ema.co.zw.

many issues related to environmental problems. If poverty is not eradicated in Zimbabwe, environmental degradation will remain unresolved. In other words, poverty and environmental destruction should be viewed as two sides of the same coin.

Women as Culprits of Environmental Destruction

Inasmuch as the Ecofeminist advocates are pointing to the direction in which the solution to the destruction of the environment may be found, it is important to point out that women too are perpetrators of environmental degradation.³⁹ Case studies of women in rural areas show that women are also at the forefront in deforestation, pollution, illegal mining and the general degradation of the environment. The rural women have cited poverty as the major driving force for vandalizing the environment. The women are aware that the environment needs to be protected, but they face the problems created by the current economic hardships that are beyond their control. The women are knowingly ravaging the environment. There is need for continuous awareness education, especially to the rural women, informing them that there are many dangers in destroying the environment, even for economic ends. The natural environment sustains life hence it should be protected at all cost. That women are also damaging the environment is a fact therefore Ecofeminists should be encouraged to promote programmes that protect the environment for the benefit of the entire humankind and the animals.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The theories and concepts of feminism are not the solution to the destruction of the environment in Zimbabwe, but they should not be discarded as useless. Ecofeminism is appealing for an egalitarian society as far as

³⁹ J.H. Momsen, "Gender Differences in Environmental Concern and Perception," *Geography*, 99/2, 2000, pp. 47-56.

nature and humanity is concerned. The spirit of domination is contributing to a large extent towards the destruction and the depletion of the natural environment in Zimbabwe. Both men and women are destroying the environment. The inferiority complex of women in Zimbabwe society stems from culture rather than gender, therefore there is need to challenge the existing patriarchal systems in human societies. The environment is the home for all the creatures on earth, with an interdependency relationship hence there is need for a joint effort in protecting it. In Genesis 2:15 God commanded humanity to be the stewards of His creation. Adam and Eve were in charge of the Garden of Eden. They were given the responsibility of taking good care of it and to never destroy it. Zimbabwe cannot rely on Ecofeminism alone in dealing with environmental problems because of the notable weaknesses associated with it. The chapter recommends an interdependency relationship between men, women and nature for sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 19

Zimbabwean Literary Representations of Homosexuality and Belonging

Josephine Muganiwa

Introduction

Homosexuality is a contentious issue in Zimbabwe and responses to it are largely emotional. Gunda notes that it is also a political subject that requires great caution to negotiate.¹ His summary of the situation in Zimbabwe is clear and worth quoting:

In August 1995, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Robert Gabriel Mugabe effectively put Zimbabwe on the international map on the subject of “homosexuality.” Since then, “homosexuality” has been part of the public discourses in Zimbabwe, especially political and religious discourses. Since the infamous “worse than dogs and pigs” speech

¹ Gunda Masiwa Ragies, *The Bible and Homosexuality in Zimbabwe*, Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2010.

by Mugabe,² there has been some interest in studying “homosexuality.”³ However, in all these major publications the main focus has been on colonial and post-colonial manifestations of “homosexuality.” This framework was fixed by the manner in which the discussions were initiated by political expediency. The political need was served by the insistence of Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ), which came into being around 1990 and sought to firmly establish itself by taking part at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF) in 1995.⁴

To give political weight to homosexuality at a time when the economy was underperforming and the West was becoming too inquisitive, “homosexuality” was packaged as Western and not African, hence voting for politicians who were painted as western stooges meant an acceptance of homosexuality, and western aid was labelled a bribe to induce people to accept homosexuality. From a religious perspective, the “righteous” African continent was painted as being under the temptation of the “evil” West. With discussions in some western churches moving ever closer to full acceptance of sexual orientation as

² Chris Dunton and Mai Palmberg, “Human Rights and Homosexuality in Southern Africa,” *Current African*, Issue 19, Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1996, pp. 10-11; Tabona Shoko, “Worse than Dogs and Pigs: Attitudes toward Homosexual Practice in Zimbabwe,” *Journal of Homosexuality*, 2010, pp. 634-649; Masiwa Ragies Gunda, *The Bible and Homosexuality in Zimbabwe: A Socio-historical Analysis of the Political, Cultural and Christian Arguments in the Homosexual Debate with Special Reference to the Bible*, Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2010, pp. 198-202.

³ Chris Dunton and Mai Palmberg, “Human Rights and Homosexuality in Southern Africa,” Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Mai 1996; Tabona Shoko, “Worse than Dogs and Pigs: Attitudes toward Homosexual Practice in Zimbabwe,” *Journal of Homosexuality*, 57:5, pp. 634-649.

⁴ Keith Goddard, “A Fair Representation: GALZ and History of the Gay Movement in Zimbabwe,” *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*, vol. 16, Issue 1, 2004, pp. 75-98; Masiwa Ragies Gunda, *The Bible and Homosexuality in Zimbabwe. A Socio-historical Analysis of the Political, Cultural and Christian Arguments in the Homosexual Debate with Special Reference to the Bible*, Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2010, pp. 198-202.

something God-given, as well as embracing same-sex couples in the family of believers, the call for stronger prayers for this abomination not to infect Africa became louder and clearer.⁵

This chapter discusses the issue from a literary point of view. It analyses the representation of homosexuality in selected Zimbabwean texts to glean the attitudes towards the phenomenon expressed. Representations of characters are largely influenced by the author's own attitude to the subject matter. Milton clearly shows that he is in support of the President's view on homosexuality in Zimbabwe and hence the title of his novel, *Not in Zimbabwe*. Tendai Huchu's title does not easily give away the content, *The Hairdresser of Harare*. There is ambiguity on who clinches the title in Khumalo's *Hair and Beauty Treatment Salon* between Dumisani and Vimbai. Both novels, however, have the church and the political situation in Zimbabwe as the backdrop to their stories.

Summaries of the Novels

The Hairdresser of Harare is narrated by Vimbai, a single mother who works as a hairdresser. Her position as the best hairdresser at Khumalo Hair and Beauty Treatment Salon is threatened when a young man, Dumisani, joins the staff. He is very good at the job and the salon becomes very popular. Vimbai resents him until he negotiates for a pay rise for everyone with immediate effect. As they talk, he lets her know he is looking for cheaper accommodation and Vimbai lets him move in with her in a house inherited from her late brother. They become friends and he reveals that he has fallen out with his family but wants to attend his brother's wedding. She encourages him to go and he asks Vimbai to be his date. At the wedding he introduces her as his girlfriend and his

⁵ Ezra Chitando and A. van Klinken, "Masculinities, HIV and Religion in Africa," in E. Tomalin (ed), *The Routledge Handbook of Religions and Global Development*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2015, pp. 2-3.

family embrace her completely. Vimbai also falls in love with him and thinks he is the best man that ever lived, good looking, sensitive and caring. As Manager at the salon, Dumisani arranges their schedule such that most of the time they are not at work at the same time. He becomes evasive, but Vimbai is busy because Dumi's family have helped her to open her own salon at Sammy Levy village. She suspects he is cheating on her, especially when he goes to Nyanga for a weekend without inviting her. She goes into his room, reads his diary and discovers his secret. The action she takes leads to Dumi being violated and he wakes up in Avenues Hospital. In the end he leaves for the UK to start a new life.

Not in Zimbabwe is the story of Tongai, the son of Pastor Bindu of Highway to Heaven Ministries and Member of Parliament Mavis Bindu, who has recently returned from studying in the Netherlands. He is gay and his partner, Keith, turns out to be his sister's fiancé. This is discovered while the family is at table and Tongai walks in calling Keith by name and the endearing 'babe.' Mavis and Leah faint to be resuscitated in hospital. The drama in the story centres on the conflict generated by this discovery. Tongai runs away to his rural home. The grandmother is away and Tongai uses this to sodomize six young boys in the village. Chief Chisora sends his men to arrest him but the elders are divided on the issue since his mother is a minister. Chief Chisora dies in rage at the calamities brought to the village due to Tongai's abomination. Village gossip says the Minister sent goblins to attack the chief, so that he does not report his son to the police. Meanwhile Keith is in hospital incontinent having damaged his sphincter muscles through anal sex. The attending doctor says he is bound by law to report sodomy to the police. The Minister bribes him not to report. Keith is also given a visa and ticket to the Netherlands to keep him quiet. Unfortunately, he messes himself while checking in, leading to security intervention who discover \$20,000 \$US which he fails to account for. Keith misses the flight. The story is broadcast on national TV. Members of Pastor Bindu's church are shocked and leave

the church. Tongai is arrested while trying to cross the Limpopo into South Africa. The Minister loses her job and is charged for bribing. The story ends with Tongai's interview on TV, where he explains how he became gay, possessed by a spirit of homosexuality that was cast out by his father. Tongai apologizes to all he hurt. His fiancé, Gina forgives him and promises to wait for him to come out of prison, then they would get married.

Depiction of the Key Characters

The depiction of the key characters is dependent on the author's perception of the phenomenon. Huchu considers homosexuality a human condition and therefore perfectly normal. The challenge, as depicted by Huchu, is that people are not willing to let go of their fears and preconceived ideas on the topic. This is best highlighted in Fungai's philosophical exposition:

[Sexuality] is that attribute within humans that makes them interested in sex. Sex being that most pleasurable function of the body, which is sometimes used for procreation but more often not. We assume that there are two types of sexuality since everything is made in pairs, light and dark, good and evil, etcetera. The one we shall call heterosexuality, which is an attraction of opposites, and the other we shall call homosexuality which is an attraction of matching subjects. ... Bisexuality is not a true essence in itself because at any given moment in time it can fall into the category of heterosexual or the category of homosexual. Therefore, it is an illusion that misleads us from the truth of our enquiry. And so we will avoid that false detour which will lead us nowhere ... because we have defined sexualities, we must announce that it is males and females who partake in these activities. That men should be attracted to women and vice versa is something we should take for granted. We now also take for granted that humans are created in pairs, but there we find ourselves mistaken. There are hermaphrodites, those born with both genders, who straddle the line between man and woman.

That can only lead to the conclusion that man and woman may not be as distinct as they seem,” said one called Armstrong.

Correct. When we use our brains, we can see that between the two genders there are a myriad of possibilities; the leap from male to female is not straightforward as our senses tell us. Therefore, when you look at what you think is a man and what you think is a woman, you often fail to recognize or acknowledge all the other ambiguous possibilities.

(At this point one of them stood up and left)

If there weren't this subtle range of distinctions, then these two sexualities would not exist; there would be one or none but not two genders. At this juncture we must then say that homosexuality is not only there but that it is actually necessary, after all approximately ten percent of any population is gay or homosexual.”⁶

Dumisani is therefore presented as an admirable human being. He has a great physical appearance, is well groomed, courteous with great taste on clothes. He is sporty and macho. He is also artistic as evident in his hairdressing skill and appreciation of music. He is principled, defends clients and honours ladies because he wants what is fair. He loves children and plays with Chiwoniso, Vimbai's daughter. He also helps her with her homework patiently, a task that irritates the biological mother. Dumi has great social skills and fits in any situation comfortably. He falls in love like any other human being but does not cheat on his partners. The author gives us all these details bit by bit till the climax when we discover he is in love with men, first Colin, then Mr M_. By the time we make this discovery, as an audience we have fallen in love with the character. The question is, do we write him off simply because he is gay?

Dumi debunks the myth that homosexuals are misguided and abused youth as in the image of Steve in *The African Tea Cosy* by Violet Masilo. Steve is sodomized and introduced to drug peddling at a young age by a

⁶ Tendai Huchu, *The Hairdresser of Harare*, Harare: Weaver Press, 2010, p. 177.

Nigerian family friend while in the UK. Consequently, he has weird sexual tastes, “an insatiable desire for kinky sex, mostly in the form of bondage and rape scenarios.”⁷ Dumi comes from a stable Catholic family and does not exhibit any anti-social behaviour, he is actually very good at social etiquette. Neither are homosexuals simply poor people doing it for money and privilege like the artist in Petina Gappah’s *The Book of Memory*. The Ncubes are rich and Dumi has attended the best schools in Zimbabwe. He is proudly Zimbabwean as he refuses to go abroad and defends local music. Mateveke notes that the novel seems to peddle the stereotype that homosexuality is the disease of the elite who fraternize with white people and therefore it is really a Western phenomenon.⁸ However, the fact that the characters are rounded makes the audience appreciate the single case study rather than generalizing types.

In contrast, Milton presents a rude, selfish character who alienates himself from the audience right from the start. His anti-social behaviour gets on everyone’s nerves and he leaves a trail of pain and destruction (Keith and the boys’ physical pain, emotional and psychological trauma for the pastor, minister, his sister and ex-girlfriend). The irony is that he considers Zimbabwe to be uncivilized as it has not legalized homosexuality, but he provides society with justification on why it must never be legalized. This is the author’s agenda as in the end he makes Tongai declare that:

[President Mugabe] is totally right,” he said. “Zimbabwe is blessed to have a leader who shuns evil, a leader who strongly rejects imposition of western values without any fear. President Mugabe understands and

⁷ Violet Masilo, *The African Tea Cosy*, Harare: Zimbabwe Women Writers, 2010.

⁸ Pauline Mateveke, "Critique and Alternative Imaginations: Homosexuality and Religion," in Adriaan van Klinken and Ezra Chitando (eds), *Contemporary Zimbabwean Literature' in Public Religion and the Politics of Homosexuality in Africa*, London and New York: Routledge, 2016.

respects God's position on homosexuality, unlike other presidents who replace God's commandments with human rights."⁹

The novel is littered with excerpts from the president's actual speeches castigating homosexuals. This makes the narrative fall short of artistic literary qualities and be blatant propaganda in aid of what Mateveke calls 'controlling mechanisms with which hegemonic structures are maintained,'¹⁰ in this case Christianity and the political structure of Zimbabwe represented by his father and mother respectively. Milton's characters are types to fulfil his goal. Keith is a misguided youth from a broken family, while Tongai is a rebellious child. The forgiveness and reconciliation at the end of the novel is therefore not convincing but simply fulfilling an expected script of Christian repentance and forgiveness. The ending is contrived and not flowing from events and character growth. The story adopts a folkloric structure where offenders are punished and the good characters are rewarded. Tongai is imprisoned for sodomizing his victims. Keith suffers degeneration of his sphincter muscle because of consensual anal sex, which is unnatural in the framework of the story. Gina's reward is the promised marriage to Tongai for being faithful to engagement vows and standing by the family. This is to buttress the fact that heterosexual union is the will of God. The supposed happily-ever-after ending is a bubble in the context of HIV and AIDS. That risk still stands in the face of Tongai's irresponsible sexual behaviour, demon possessed or not. If Gina were my daughter, I would tell her to run and pray for a chaste husband like herself (assuming they abided by the moral code of their church).

⁹ Chitsime J. Milton, *Not in Zimbabwe*, Harare: Foxworth Press, 2015, p. 72.

¹⁰ Pauline Mateveke, "Critique and Alternative Imaginations: Homosexuality and Religion," in Adriaan van Klinken and Ezra Chitando (eds), *Contemporary Zimbabwean Literature in Public Religion and the Politics of Homosexuality in Africa*, London and New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 226.

Representation of Christian Reaction to Homosexuality

Both novels make reference to the Bible to reveal attitudes towards homosexuality by different people. Mateveke notes that Gunda's study is interesting in that it reveals that the Bible is generally invoked in Zimbabwean political and public debates as final authority on the subject of homosexuality.¹¹ Christians cite biblical texts against homosexuality while homosexuals themselves cite the Bible to emphasize the message of equality of all people, empathy and love demonstrated by Jesus towards those at the margins of society. In *The Hairdresser of Harare* Vimbai's pastor quotes Revelation 21:8 which is a list of sinners who will not enter heaven. The list includes the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and liars. The pastor decides to zero in on sexual immorality even though it is not the only form of sin listed in the scripture,

Brothers and sisters, don't you see the signs in front of your eyes? Look at Zimbabwe. Ask why the Lord is punishing us like this. It's because the whole earth has become like Babylon or Sodom and Gomorrah. There are no more values in people's hearts. Just coming to church this morning, I saw many young women wearing mini-skirts. Why do they do this? They do not know it, but it is because they are sent by the devil to entice men and to lead their hearts astray. They are harlots like Jezebel and if you cannot resist, then it is better for you to pluck your eyes out so you may not see. People are having sex outside of marriage and this angers the Lord. There are people raping children and they will feel the wrath of the Lord on judgement day. Timothy 3:1-9 teaches that 'Men will be lovers of themselves in the last days.' You must be on the lookout for homosexuals and sexual deviants. Perverts shall burn. How

¹¹ Pauline Mateveke, "Critique and Alternative Imaginations: Homosexuality and Religion," in Adriaan van Klinken and Ezra Chitando (eds), *Contemporary Zimbabwean Literature' in Public Religion and the Politics of Homosexuality in Africa*, London and New York: Routledge, 2016.

can a man and another man sleep together? God made Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve. Can a woman and a woman make a baby?¹²

The fact that the pastor chooses to focus on sexual immorality attests to the idea that the church has always sought to control people's sexuality. The irony is that sexual immorality is singled out as raising the wrath of God against the nation of Zimbabwe and not the other listed sins such as lies. The economic meltdown is explained as the wrath of God against sexual perversion and topping the list is homosexuality. The bias against homosexuals is noted in that when Vimbai discovers the diary she considers Phillip, the philanderer and rapist, to be better than Dumi simply because he is heterosexual. The Ncubes, Dumi's family, embrace Vimbai despite being a single mother and older than their son because they believe she has cured him of his pathological disease, homosexuality. His credit cards are restored and he is embraced back in the family. The warning by the pastor to look out for perverts seems to suggest that they should be ostracized.

The warning in *Not in Zimbabwe* is to stay away from sexually immoral people as that exposes one to demon possession. Tongai says,

I was possessed by the spirit of homosexuality, and to God's glory, my father prayed for me and I received my deliverance ... When I was in the Netherlands during my studies, I attended a gay wedding out of curiosity. I saw men kissing, and from there, I developed the urge for same sex relationships and a sudden disinterest in women. So I started dating other men.¹³

According to this depiction, homosexuality is a sign of demon possession requiring exorcism. This interpretation seems to tally with African tradi-

¹² Violet Masilo, *The African Tea Cosy*, Harare: Zimbabwe Women Writers, 2010, p. 72.

¹³ Chitsime J. Milton, *Not in Zimbabwe*, Harare: Foxworth Press, 2015, p. 71.

tional interpretation as highlighted by Mateveke from a reading of testimonials from Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ).¹⁴ Blaming of calamities on sexual perversion (*makuna-kuna*) is also a feature of African traditional religion. While Vimbai's pastor in *The Hairdresser of Harare* refers to the Lord of the Bible, African Traditional Religion refers to the ancestors and Musikavanhu. Chief Chisora says,

Tongai will not go unpunished for the calamities he has caused in our community. The crops have dried up. Our rivers have dried up and we subsequently lost 80 cattle. How then can we let it go. As long as I live, Tongai will face the wrath of the law. If I catch him, I will squeeze him like lice in my hand. He must be punished.¹⁵

If the whole community is punished for the sin of one man, this proves Fungai's argument in *The Hairdresser of Harare* wrong. Homosexuality is not a private thing that harms no one. The congregants in pastor Bindu's church leave in large numbers once they know of his son's abomination. The church is therefore tainted by one man's actions. The Zimbabwean church reacts by condemning and ostracizing the offending man, thereby denying them citizenship in the family, community and nation as reflected in the novels above.

This contrasts with the ideal of what is expected of Christians in order to heal the world. 1 John 4:15-21 urges Christians to exhibit the love of Christ so that many will see the light. Ephesians 4:15 says they must speak the truth in love to be more like Christ. The underlying argument is that everyone sins, but Jesus' grace covers us all, therefore no one has the right to judge others. The best literary representation of this principle

¹⁴ Pauline Mateveke, "Critique and Alternative Imaginations: Homosexuality and Religion," in Adriaan van Klinken and Ezra Chitando (eds), *Contemporary Zimbabwean Literature' in Public Religion and the Politics of Homosexuality in Africa*, London and New York: Routledge, 2016.

¹⁵ Violet Masilo, *The African Tea Cosy*, Harare: Zimbabwe Women Writers, 2010, p. 48.

that I have come across so far is Karen Kingsbury's *Longing: Bailey Flannigan Series Book Three*. Bailey is a dancer on Broadway and her colleagues resent her because she is a Christian. This is because most of them have been rejected by their families for being gay or using drugs. Bailey finally wins them over by showing them love and discussing the Bible with them. The Holy Spirit convicts them in their own time and space. Gerald is convicted to give his life to Christ not because he is afraid of hell fire (as highlighted by his uncle) but because he understands the love of Christ for him. Bailey says,

People get freaked out about the Bible ... like it's something to be used against people. A literary, spiritual hammer." The expression on Gerald's face told her that he was tracking with her, not feeling nervous or judged. She put her fingers on the edge of his Bible. "God wants us to see this as His love letter to us. Everything we need to live a life free of the bondage of sin, all we need to experience that abundant life of faith and purpose and closeness to Him."¹⁶

In this Bailey shows that the Bible is for everyone and no one has a monopoly of interpretation. To answer Gunda's question, the Bible then remains relevant in contemporary times. The problem of the church is that it casts a blind eye on some listed sins in the Bible but tends to highlight sexual sins as the worst there could be. That means that even within the church cliques of exclusion begin to form. Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 calls for unity and acknowledgement of God's grace on everyone.

Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people – none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God. Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of

¹⁶ Karen Kingsbury, *Longing: Bailey Flannigan Series Book Three*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011, p. 219.

the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (*New Living Translation*)

In the texts discussed, Mavis does not see her power hunger as a sin but condemns her son. The father keeps saying the devil is a liar, thereby putting the blame on demons and the devil. They both forget that individuals have choices. They have chosen where they want to belong and Tongai is entitled to make that choice. God gives everyone free will to choose whether to belong to his Kingdom or to reject the offer. Another challenge of contemporary Christianity in Zimbabwe is the desire to bully everyone into particular theological positions which is a manifestation of Foucault's argument on power. Christians are simply called to love all people and speak the word without judging. The novels discussed above show that the tendency is to force the deviant to fall in line with the dominant line of thought in family, church or nation. The tendency to label one by their sin is therefore simply power play in the name and shame game.

Political Expediency and Homosexuality

The intersection between religion and politics has been highlighted by several scholars. However, at times religion has no part in it as exemplified in the novels under discussion. Mr M's wife in *The Hairdresser of Harare* is a government minister who uses every opportunity to further her political ambition. When she finds Trina having her hair done at Mrs Khumalo's salon she shouts slogans against white people and calls the war veterans to beat her up. Dumi defends Trina and is labeled MDC. When she discovers that he is having an affair with her husband, she already has a score to settle with him. The picture she paints of her husband is of a man who loves sexual experimentation and Dumi is simply his latest experiment. She therefore decides to eliminate Dumi and sends thugs to kill him. Her motivation is simple, by keeping her husband's activities secret she is able to maintain her dignity and respect

as a minister. What she safeguards is clearly expressed in *Not in Zimbabwe* through Mavis Bindu. Her actions are largely guided by the need to keep her son's behaviour a secret, especially from the President, so that she keeps her seat in parliament. That is why she generously bribes the doctor and Keith. She might have succeeded had she not called the Anti-corruption by mistake instead of the Police Commissioner and hence exposing herself.

It is interesting to note that even though the law is in place, it is selectively applied. The elders warn Chief Chisora against judging the minister's son. The police officer who writes out the docket is also given the same warning. In the end he decides to preserve his job and livelihood for his family rather than fight a losing battle. This is evidence of corruption in Zimbabwe that makes a mockery of the legal system. Sodomy is clearly illegal in Zimbabwe but no one has the courage to follow it up when it involves high officials in government. This is what helps Dumi escape to England as Mr M_ makes the arrangements. Keith and Tongai would have succeeded in real life but are made to get caught due to the style chosen by the author that emphasizes punishment on wrongdoers. The style in *Not in Zimbabwe* is socialist realism that points to the situation hoped for by the author as opposed to realism in *The Hairdresser of Harare*. Dumi escapes to the UK with injuries that may result in disability. Vimbai is happy his life is preserved but she feels heavily the loss of his companionship and love. Reality is that in life we win some and lose some, binaries are illusions.

Homosexuality is thus presented as a political subject in terms of inclusion and exclusion in social groups. Fungai loses his friends in the Philosophy group in Budiriro because he defends homosexuality. They even go further to label him as one. Vimbai finds it difficult to believe that Dumi is one because it goes against her religious propaganda and the stereotypes paddled. She says,

Dumi is a Homosexual - *Ngochani*. If it wasn't written in his hand and before my eyes, I would have denied it. I could not have foreseen this. He spoke like a normal man, wore clothes like a normal man and even walked like a normal man. Everything about him was masculine. Didn't homosexuals walk about with handbags and speak with squeaky voices?¹⁷

The dominant culture or system determines what is normal or marginal. It is ironic that after confessing that Dumi is a normal human being in all other respects, Vimbai feels revulsion at his sexual orientation which negates all the good in him. It is only after serious reflection and listening to Michelle and Fungai that Vimbai decides to help Dumi and cherish their relationship. Fungai says friendship is more important than political and legal considerations, "I can only say that friendship should rise above man-made laws, which tend to be capricious by their very nature."¹⁸ The assumption is that friendship is based on mutual love, respect and trust. These are the same values that Christianity is supposed to foster but institutionalized Christianity has a tendency to be dogmatic. Vimbai realizes this and is able to be a true friend to Dumi regardless of previous views on homosexuality. She sees him first as a human being with strengths and weaknesses that transcend political expediency.

Conclusion

The analysis of the selected literary texts shows that there is a collusion between the state and religion in condemning homosexuality in Zimbabwe. The texts also show that individuals act out of personal motivation albeit to align themselves with the dominant ideological stance of the group they belong to. Politicians defend their public image and ensure they remain in good favour with the President. Christians exhibit hostility

¹⁷ Violet Masilo, *The African Tea Cosy*, Harare: Zimbabwe Women Writers, 2010, p. 166.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 178.

towards homosexuality in order to prove their morality and commitment to God. This is contrary to the injunction that they should exhibit love for all mankind as evidence that they love God. Instead of condemning sinners, they are to show them the love of Christ. Zimbabwean Christians tend to forget that all sins are the same in God's eyes and lay emphasis on sexual sins, especially homosexuality. If Zimbabwe is truly a Christian nation, as claimed by some, then homosexuals must be embraced in love while the truth of the gospel is maintained. I agree with Nick Roen that homophobia has no place in the church because 'this fear-based attitude often leads to unhelpful stereotypes, prejudice, and even cruel mistreatment.'¹⁹ He goes on to list questions that one ought to ask themselves:

Honestly consider your own heart in the following examples:

Is your belief that *same-sex sexual activity is sin* based finally on solid biblical exegesis? Or is it really based on the fact that you don't understand how someone could be attracted to another of the same sex, and this unknown seems to you just plain creepy?

Is your opposition to so-called same-sex marriage based on a principled biblical definition of marriage? Or is it more influenced by a fear that same-sex couples might signal the unraveling of comfortable cultural norms and usher in the end of a once-pristine "Judeo-Christian society"? Or maybe your fear is more than one such couple might move in next door, and you might actually be pressured to befriend them?

Does your opposition to homosexual practice include the ability to lovingly welcome LGBT people into a Sunday service or other gathering with other Christians? Or does opposition for you mean that you wish

¹⁹ Nick Roen, "Homophobia has no Place in the Church," 2016, www.desiringgod.org [14.7.2017].

they would just stay away so you aren't made uncomfortable by their very presence?

In standing for Christian sexual ethics, do you encourage and support those SSA believers within the church who are striving to remain faithful to biblical teachings by welcoming them into full participation in church life? Or does standing for biblical sexuality mean that they can come to church, but they can't grow in influence or serve the body through teaching, and they should probably stay away from the youth group?

Biblical exegesis is a wonderful underpinning for belief, and love is a worthy motive for action. Fear is a horrible reason for both.

It would do us well to humbly examine our hearts to reveal the motives and fears behind our attitudes toward people who are identified as "gay." Happily upholding Christian sexual ethics is not the same as harbouring animosity toward an entire group of people, simply because you find them yucky.

Literary representation of homosexuality is more useful when it is truly creative rather than dogmatic. Round characters tend to be more convincing than types and contrived stories. They also tend to debunk stereotypes and allow the audience to identify with the human in everyone.

Chapter 20

Divination in a Changing Society: The Case of North Western Province of Zambia

Kenneth Kapalu Muzata

Introduction

Divination is a concept, an abstract concept if one has not experienced it, when one reads and imagines what divination is, that is an imagined experience difficult to believe. To discuss this topic, “divination in a changing society,” let me begin with a lived experience of divination, not that I performed divination but that I lived in a community where divination was embraced and practiced. In 1990, after writing my grade 9 end of year examinations in Chavuma, I walked about 200 km back to my village (Chiseta Nyawanda) in Chief Chinyama Litapi’s chiefdom. In my village lived my uncle, a cousin to my mother. He had several children, grown up sons and daughters. The mother to his daughters had died some 2-4 year ago then. One day, one of the daughters suddenly fell seriously sick. My uncle was stuck. He asked the girl what the problem was, but she could not say. Then my uncle asked me to accompany him to a diviner some 50 km away across the Lungevungu River. There was no reliable clinic in my village just as the only school that was there ended at grade 4. The only reliable health centre was about 70 km away. However, my uncle opted to go to the diviner. We started off in the morning, crossed the Lungevungu river and off the banks of the river we went to meet the diviner. When we were about 1 km away, my uncle told me to place some coins at two different points before we reached the diviner’s place. I didn’t know why, but later I learnt that it was meant to

test the diviner's credibility. When we reached the diviner's home, we found him unsettled, moving up and down around his divination arena, a sign of "vanamulyate" in Luvale, meaning expecting visitors. With a 'mufuka' tail of an animal in his hand and swinging it around east, north, south and west, he welcomed us with a phrase, "kwahola!" meaning "are we safe," things are not okay! Before we could sit, the diviner told us we had hidden coins on our way to test him. He led us to the coins. When we were back, without us narrating why we were there, he started divining. Using his mortar and a mirror, he told us, "you are here because there is a problem, the problem is not death, it concerns an illness of a young girl who fell sick suddenly, but you don't know why?" we agreed along as he continued pounding, shaking gadgets and checking his mirror. He continued, "Your daughter quarreled with her elder sister and never told anyone, they uttered bad words against each other, and this made the spirit for the young girl to aggrieve. The dead mother was not happy and thus the reason she decided to inflict an illness on her to take her and stay with her in peace. But as you get back, you will find her recovered, she has even eaten *nshima*.¹ Before you reach the village, you will find a small boy who will tell you about the girl. Do not worry! When you go, ask the girls to come together, say what they said to each other and ask them to apologize to each other." When we arrived back home about 16:00 hrs we found the young brother to the girls who told us the patient was much better and had eaten *nshima*. When we entered the village, we performed the instructions of the diviner. We made a 'mulundu' heap of soil and brought the girls together for the ordeal. They both narrated that they quarreled and pledged never to quarrel again. All was well thereafter!

We can apply several modern concepts from this story. I was a grade 9 school leaver then but to date, I do not understand how the diviner knew

¹ A Zambian staple food made from cassava or maize flour.

everything about the illness and our movement when he lived far away. There were no phones then in my village, no technologies such as internet and communication whatsoever. Today, I am a learned person; I still do not understand how the diviner knew about the whole story. However, the bottom line is that the problem was resolved. Counselling was the only remedy to this problem through performance of simple rituals on a '*mulundu*' heap of sand.

Divination, whether labeled as a pagan practice, primitive or demonic, worked and still works to solve people's problems in their contexts. Divination is a practice in traditional communities of foretelling or finding out the causes of certain misfortunes. In traditional societies, there is no natural or scientific cause to misfortunes such as death, miscarriage, sexual impotence, barrenness, accidents, and so forth. If a person was struck by lightning and died, investigations to find the one who caused such death by lightening were seriously instituted through divination. Grillo says "Diviners are not only prognosticators of the future, but diagnosticians and healers. With their special insight, they supposedly identify the spiritual sources of social and physical ills and use their reputed powers to offer remedies to fight the malevolent forces that plague their clients. In most cases, the principal goal of the consultation is to determine what sacrifice will alleviate the client's suffering."²

In other communities, divination goes beyond foretelling. Human beings receive advice and guidance from the spirits and ancestors.³ Muzata reviewed several published works describing divination as a medium of communication between humans and the ancestors; a way of securing information from the divine source; a way to uphold ethics, morality and of psychotherapy; a means for rooting out evil; a source of ultimate

² L.S. Grillo, "Total Impact: Being Changed by Divination in West Africa," 2017, www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Divination [19.8.2017].

³ www.aboutsanteria.com/divination.html.

meaning and a crisis resort.⁴ Certainly, from my lived experience, psychotherapy was part of the whole ordeal. Routes for counselling should be studied from such practices. Unfortunately, modern religions such as Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism disregard this practice as evil. The Book of Deuteronomy explicitly warns the Israelites against engaging in the Canaanite practice of divination. “Do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nation’s there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft or casts spells or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD ... You must be blameless before the LORD our God.”⁵

Another modern religion with contrary perception towards divination is Hinduism. Hindus believe that the Vedas convey the purest truth for all humanity. Yamamoto quotes the Manu laws of Hindu jurisprudence which state that “all those traditions and all those despicable systems of philosophy, which are not based on the Vedas, are declared to be founded on darkness.”⁶ Hinduism certainly obtains truth from the Vedas and divination is one of those considered acts of darkness.

Divination (*kahanah*), or foretelling future events, is unlawful in Islam. In response to a question by Hakim on whether to consult diviners or not,

⁴ Kenneth Muzata, "Evaluating the Validity and Reliability of Divination Methods: A Case of North Western Province of Zambia," *Social and Basic Sciences Research Review* (IBSSRR), vol. 2, Issue 2, 2014; J. Ankerberg and J. Weldon, *Knowing the Facts about Divination Practices and Occult Games*, ATRI Publishing, 2012; W. Schweiker, *Companion to Religious Ethics*, Malden MA: Blackwell, 2005.

⁵ Deuteronomy 18:9-13.

⁶ I.J. Yamamoto, *Hinduism, TM and Hare Krishna*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998, p. 32.

the prophet said, “now that you have embraced Islam, you must not consult them.” Islam therefore, just as Hinduism and Christianity, does not condone divination, which was a practice of those that converted to Islam.

The condemnations of divination as a pagan practice raises questions. How would African societies have lived to solve the problems they had without hospitals, counselling services, and modern education and even within the modern religions themselves? Does the so-called civilization come by design or has it a beginning from the so-called primitive life or paganism? Croucamp, in a study of divination among West Africans, lashed out at evangelists that condemned everything Africans did including divination as pagan, arguing that divination was connected to technology.⁷ Somehow, some degree of agreement is eminent here. If Africans were not condemned in everything they did through religious teachings, Africa perhaps could have developed its own technological means of understanding the world. There were no modern medicines in the typical ancient rural areas, but people lived on charms and plants, and on divination to find cure for diseases.

However, while recognizing the role divination played and perhaps still plays, there were and are still cases that divination brought divisions, fighting and acts of cruelty in communities. In many communities where divination found that someone had caused someone’s death, the accused person suffered the consequences of brutality from the community. The diviner himself did not brutalize the accused person after divination, but the relatives or the community. Human rights, in particular, suffer as a result of divination. Zambia is a signatory to several conventions and declarations on human rights. A person accused of an offence is only

⁷ A. Croucamp, “Traditional African Divination Systems as Information Technology,” https://mindburstwork.com/sites/default/files/Traditional%20African%20divination%20systems%20as%20information%20technology_0.pdf.

found guilty when the laws determine that, beyond reasonable doubt, the accused committed an offence and even then, courts have stipulated punishment for all offences. No human being is allowed to inflict punishment on any other person who is still considered a suspect or has not been proven guilty. A person is required to enjoy the human rights they own. However, communities in many instances have taken the law into their own hands by killing persons suspected of witchcraft. Persons suspected to be witches have been shot dead, victimized, robbed of their property and in other cases, mob “justice” killed them. Witchcraft allegations can profoundly affect those accused by subjecting them to harassment, violence, and even death.⁸ In many cases, ‘to be labeled a witch ... is tantamount to being declared liable to be killed with impunity.’⁹ Several killings have been done of people accused of practicing witchcraft. Courts have also convicted some people accused of witchcraft and thrown some in jail. Schnoebelen has outlined several injustices on persons accused of witchcraft in different African countries and in European countries where those accused migrated.¹⁰ For example, hundreds of people are charged each year by ‘Bangu’s Witchcraft Police’ for practicing witchcraft in the Central African Republic.¹¹

Rabecca Mushota, reporter for the *Times of Zambia* reported on 3rd March 2014 that a 70-year-old man of Kabende Village in Chief Kasoma of Bangweulu in Samfya was killed and buried by a mob that suspected

⁸ J.J. Schnoebelen, "New Issues in Refugee Research," Research Paper no. 169, *Witchcraft Allegations, Refugee Protection and Human Rights: A Review of the Evidence*, Switzerland: UNHCR, 2009, p. 2.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid; “Mob Kills, Buries Man Accused of Witchcraft,” *Times of Zambia*, www.times.co.zm/?p=12566.

him of practicing witchcraft. It was alleged that the accused was changing into a crocodile, which was terrorizing people in the area.¹² People take the law into their own hands. The victim is never given chance to be heard. However, since colonial times, laws have been made against witchcraft and witch finding.¹³ Despite denouncing divination either by religious or modern laws, divination has continued to be part of not only local rural people but even people that have attained substantial levels of education. From independence, Zambia has changed a great deal socially, legally, educationally and spiritually. This study was conducted to see whether practices such as divination still had value in a changing society.

Statement of a Problem

The search for reality is man's ultimate aim. Man (humankind), whether modern, primitive or traditional finds means to know the truth about themselves and what surrounds them. If interpretivists believe that the primary causes of behaviour of a metal are in the environment, divination is used to determine what in the environment troubles man's existence and then find means to improve that environment. Whether that is moral or not depends on the context. Epistemologically, knowledge would not be possible without belief in justification.¹⁴ There existed and still exists justification for divination in our communities. Divination as a traditional practice is as old as the human race, and older than the people of who practice it today. Many people demonize divination without getting

¹² *Times of Zambia* [3.3.2014].

¹³ White (1947), cited in R. Turner, *Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual, Myth and Ritual*, Ithaka: Cornell University Press, 1975, p. 243.

¹⁴ R. Audi, *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge, 2003.

to its philosophy. Cline, explaining the nature of truth according to pragmatists, says, "Pragmatists identified the nature of truth with the principle of action. Put simply, truth does not exist in some abstract realm of thought independent of social relationships or actions; instead, truth is a function of an active process of engagement with the world and verification."¹⁵ Divination is action oriented through which practitioners find truth and the gadgets used during divination symbolize verification of the truth. Muzata listed and explained a number of methods used to divine among the people of the North Western Province of Zambia.¹⁶ Nevertheless, whether what they find is true or not depends on what is constructed as truth. According to William James' Pragmatic Theory of Truth, "beliefs are considered to be true if and only if they are useful and can be practically applied."¹⁷ In Zambia, divination has continued to be practiced in communities of different classes of people, ranging from lowly educated to highly educated people.¹⁸ It is, however, not known whether education and or any other factors have an influence on the practice of divination in Zambian society. From independence in 1964, Zambia has transformed in terms of education and education is expected to be in the forefront of changing people's traditional beliefs. This study was conducted to determine whether divination is still practiced in Zambia or

¹⁵ A. Cline, "Pragmatic Theory of Truth: What is Truth?" *Theories of Truth*, www.thoughtco.com/pragmatic-theory-of-truth-250550 [4.9.2017].

¹⁶ K.K. Muzata, "Evaluating the Validity and Reliability of Divination Methods: A Case of North Western Province of Zambia," *Social and Basic Sciences Research Review* (IBSSRR), vol. 2, Issue 2, 2014;

¹⁷ William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for some Old Ways of Thinking*, New York: Longman Green, 1907.

¹⁸ K.K. Muzata, "Evaluating the Validity and Reliability of Divination Methods: A Case of North Western Province of Zambia," *Social and Basic Sciences Research Review* (IBSSRR), vol. 2, no. 2, 2014.

not and establish the contributions of education and religion to the reduction of the practice of divination. The study further established the impact of divination on victims found to cause misfortunes in society, and whether such victims had knowledge of where to seek legal help.

Significance of the Study

There are some vices in our communities that are committed out of ignorance, others because of lack of certain services, and solutions are found in traditional beliefs. Changing traditional beliefs is not an easy thing. People may know the rights and laws; they may have knowledge about hospitals but still find it easier to consult a diviner to find solutions to their problems. The significance of this study therefore cannot be over emphasized. It would inform stakeholders interested in the provision of social services, law and health related services and activism for rights of those that are abused because of the practices discussed in this chapter. Government, civil rights organizations, international organizations interested in human rights, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of General Education, Community Development and the Ministry of Home affairs, will benefit from the results of this study. The study is expected to help influence policy directed towards human rights protection and provision of social and legal services to people, not only in the province where the study was conducted but also throughout the country where the repercussions of divination are still being heavily felt. The objectives of the study are therefore:

- To ascertain the extent to which people consult diviners.
- To examine the possible relationship between religion, education and divination.
- To establish the implications of divination to the current Zambian society.

Limitations

The biggest limitation of this study was literature on divination. It was difficult to find literature that points to the prevalence of the practice of divination, and if there was any association between education, religion and divination. In this vein, the results have been presented largely without backing from other researched works. It is hoped that this study adds new knowledge to literature so that it invokes further research and publications on issues that affect our communities such as divination.

Methodology

The study employed a quantitative approach with the support of a survey design in which 349 respondents were selected. I purposively selected participants from the selected tribes as well as random individual respondents to give them equal opportunity to participate. Targeted respondents were from the Luvale, Lunda and Kaonde tribes of North Western Zambia. Respondents who were unable to read and write had questions read for them by research assistants. The sample was drawn from seven of the nine districts of the North Western Province of Zambia. For ethical reasons, the districts and individuals that participated in the study remain anonymous in this report. Data was analyzed with the help of SPSS to derive frequencies, percentages and cross tabulations. Cross tabulations helped to establish the relationships between certain variables such as education and belief in divination. Assurances were made on the use of the data and all respondents were at liberty to take or not to take part in answering the multipurpose questionnaire.

Presentation and Discussion of Results

Respondents were asked to state whether their communities practiced divination and to what extent they practiced it.

<i>Table 1: Rating practice of divination</i>
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Very much	55	17.0%
Much	70	21.7%
Not very much	104	32.2%
Not much	94	29.1%
Total	323	100.0%

The table results show that, when ‘very much’ and ‘much’ responses are added, 38.7% of the respondents admitted that divination is still being practiced in the communities with 17% indicating that the practice was very much practiced while 21.7% said it was much practiced. Of those who said it was not very much practiced, 32.2% said it was not very much practiced while 29.1% said it was not much practiced. There was still a degree of practice, even within those who said it was not practiced. Thus, though the degree looks ignorable, the practice is prevalent in communities. When respondents were asked whether they had consulted diviners themselves in the last five years, 56 (16%) agreed while 293 (84%) did not agree. This shows that divination is done secretly. Muzata indicated that divination in the North Western province was still practiced but somehow secretly.¹⁹ Schnoebelen reported that, “in South Africa, both older men and women have been blamed for witchcraft, although statistics indicate that women are twice as likely to be accused.”²⁰ The search for truth is man’s endeavour to create a trustworthy environment in which he or she can live. Divination in traditional practice is used as an avenue for excavating truth. If modern society sees it as a bad or

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ J. Schnoebelen, “Witchcraft Allegations, Refugee Protection and Human Rights: A Review of the Evidence,” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper no. 169, Switzerland: UNHCR, 2009, p. 13.

unscientific practice, divination cannot cease without any rational challenge. James says, “Truth lives, in fact, for the most part of a credit system.” Our thoughts and beliefs “pass, so long as nothing challenges them, just as bank notes pass so long as nobody refuses them.”²¹ The practice of divination is ongoing, regardless of the rate because people see truth in it and no one seems to bring convincing reasons and evidence of truth why it should be done away with. This study established that divination is still practiced in Zambia. By law, divination is not permitted in Zambia since colonial times as the European administration introduced legislation against witchcraft and witch finding. Divination was consequently done either in secret or across the border of Portuguese Angola.”²² In Zambia, witchcraft laws do not allow divination or witch finding or even people going to seek divination. It does not allow anyone to accuse any person of witchcraft.²³

Reasons for not Consulting Diviners

The table below shows respondents’ responses to the question of reasons why they did not consult diviners in the last five years. Respondents were further requested to write any other responses that did not appear on the table of options.

<i>Table 2: Reasons for not consulting diviners</i>		
I am a Christian	230	78.5%
I am a Muslim	2	0.7%
I am a Hindu	0	0.0%

²¹ William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, New York: Longman Green, 1907, p. 7.

²² R. Turner, *Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual*, Ithaka: Cornell University Press, 1975.

²³ Witchcraft Cap 90 of the Laws of Zambia. – See below for more details.

I just don't want	15	5.1%
It is morally wrong	35	11.9%
I don't think that divining is helpful	11	3.8%
Total	293	100.0%

The results show that respondents did not consult diviners based mainly on their religious inclinations. The results showed that 78.5% did not go for divination because they were Christians and 0.7 % because they were Muslims. Christianity has an influence on people's decisions to divine. There were no reasons given based on science and education, though cross tabulations showed a relationship. While it may not be correct to condemn the divination practice in totality as pagan, religion has an influence in changing people's traditional ways of thinking. This study reveals the role of Christianity in influencing people's attitudes towards divination. Croucamp, in a study of how divination can be utilized as technology, studied the various divination practices in West Africa and tried them out as mind games for teaching and learning purposes and as problem solving.²⁴ Croucamp says, "While it is true that the skill of divination has little to do with rationality, it is an extraordinarily effective way of accessing new associations between existing bits of information. The skill of divination is all about making associations."²⁵

Reasons Given by Respondents who Consulted Diviners

The table below shows the frequency the respondents consulted diviners when they were faced with calamities.

²⁴ A. Croucamp, "Traditional African Divination Systems as Information Technology."

²⁵ Ibid.

Table 3: What misfortunes mostly called for divination

Death	343	31.1%
Illness	328	29.7%
Sexual impotence	92	8.3%
Barrenness	149	13.5%
Loss of property	120	10.9%
Disability	72	6.5%
Total	1104	100.0%

The reasons that caused respondents to consult diviners were mainly death and illness. These scored the highest percentages, but sexual impotence, barrenness, loss of property and disability were other reasons. Other reasons that were added to the list were unemployment, lack of promotion, lack of marriage and jealousy. All these reasons lack scientific merit and point to a lack of certain services in our society. When people fail to find the expected services in education and health, the result is what is being reflected above. People resort to other means such as divination as a way to solve the problems they face. These results are similar to what Muzata found that most cases that called for divination were death, sickness, disability, jealousy, bareness, sexual impotence, loss of property, lack of promotion at work, lack of employment and other misfortunes.²⁶ The nature of problems above are however associated to social services provided and the economic situation of a country determines most of these. To consult diviners because someone has no job is what some scholars call irrational. However, if after divination,

²⁶ K.K. Muzata, "Evaluating the Validity and Reliability of Divination Methods: A Case of North Western Province of Zambia," *Social and Basic Sciences Research Review* (IBSSRR), vol 2, Issue 2, 2014.

someone found what they wanted, a belief that divination worked became stronger.

Treatment of Accused Persons

Divination yielded results that communities usually believed and the accused persons were treated in various ways. The following table shows the results of how the accused persons were treated once they were found guilty of causing a misfortune.

The study reveals that accused persons are treated badly after divination. The accused were mostly beaten (29.2%) and made to pay (25.8 %) for their supposed sins. Unfortunately, killings also happened (15.9%) despite laws against this. Other bad treatments involved giving them herbs,

<i>Table 4: Responses how the accused are treated</i>		
They are killed	129	15.9%
They are beaten up	237	29.2%
They are made to pay	210	25.8%
They are exorcised	181	22.2%
They are chased from the community	37	4.6%
Their houses are burnt	8	1.0%
They are taken to the chief for discipline	5	0.6%
They are verbally abused	2	0.2%
They run away	3	0.4%
They are buried alive	1	0.1%
Total	813	100.0%

to stop the witchcraft and exorcising them. Other forms of treatment included taking the accused to the chief for discipline, chasing them from

the community, burning their property, burying them alive, and verbal abuse. This is against the human rights they are supposed to enjoy. The study reveals violation of human rights emanating from divination. There is no argument. Divination and witchcraft are synonymous. Witch finders divinate to find who they suspect to be causing problems in a community. Nevertheless, the argument may not be how reliable the results of divination are but the consequences. Schnoebelen argues, “a belief in witchcraft is not necessarily problematic but the actions taken in consequence of belief.”²⁷ Schnoebelen observed that witchcraft allegations can profoundly influence those accused by subjecting them to harassment, violence, and even death.²⁸ Why should people be accused and treated the way they are treated even when they are innocent? The Witchcraft Act Chapter 90 of the Laws of Zambia has laid down types of penalties on whoever accuses another person of being a witch or a wizard and whoever admits to using charms to cause harm to another and even to those who profess to be witch doctors or witch finders. For instance, “whoever shall be proved to be by habit or profession a witch doctor or witch finder shall be liable upon conviction to a fine of not more than one thousand five hundred penalty units or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for any term not exceeding two years, or to both.”²⁹ Even a person who solicits services of a person to name or indicate any person as being a wizard or witch is liable upon conviction to a fine not exceeding seven hundred and fifty penalty units or to imprisonment with or

²⁷ J. Schnoebelen, “Witchcraft Allegations, Refugee Protection and Human Rights: A Review of the Evidence,” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper no. 169, Switzerland: UNHCR, 2009.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ GRZ, “The Laws of Zambia: The Witchcraft Act Chapter 90,” *The Laws of Zambia*, Ministry of Legal Affairs, 1994, www.parliament.gov.zm/sites/default/files/documents/acts/Witchcraft%20Act.pdf [5.9.2017].

without hard labour for any term not exceeding one year, or to both.³⁰ The laws are plain, and clear but divination has not ceased because laws are in place. The question is, “are people aware or educated about such laws?” Thus, the need to employ educative measures on the populace becomes paramount. The need to provide workable alternatives to peoples’ problems such as sickness, sexual impotence, infertility and other calamities becomes paramount. Laws cannot be very effective in the absence of education, health facilities and generally in the absence of an enlightened society. Issues of human rights require indulgence of the education system, in any case the school curriculum and sensitization campaigns. It is difficulty to change peoples’ cultural beliefs in the absence of the education system. The following table shows a relationship between education and the belief in divination indicating that the higher in education one is, the more likely they were able to disapprove the practice.

Cross Tabulating the Relationship between Education Level and the Belief in Divination

The results were then cross tabulated between education backgrounds or level the belief in whether divination was relevant or not. The following table shows the results:

<i>Table 5: Education levels and belief in divination</i>			
Grade range	Is divination relevant?		
(<i>p</i> -value = .000)	Yes	No	Total
Grade 1-7	28	11	39
Grade 8-9	35	4	39

³⁰ Ibid.

Grade 10-12	41	58	99
Tertiary	14	124	138
Never been to school	0	22	22
Total	118	219	337
<i>* Significant at 0.05 level</i>			

Significant differences were observed between the grade level and the belief in divination at (χ^2 (4, $N = 336$) = 1.24, $p < .000$) with the strength of the relationship at ($\phi = .608$) which shows a large relationship exists between education and the belief in divination. Respondents who have attained Grade 1-9 think divination was relevant to their communities while those from Grade 10-12 and those who have reached tertiary level do not believe divination can be relevant to the community. Education can still be a factor in determining one's belief, though those who have never been to school also felt divination is not relevant to their community, just like the majority who have reached tertiary level education. Several factors could have been behind the varied responses. Of course, religion and experience could have played a part on those who have never been to school while education levels became an added advantage for those who were above grade 10 and tertiary level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

There seems to be awareness that divination is not a good practice, the reason most respondents could not agree whether they consulted diviners in the last five years or not, or it could be for the fear of the law. However, this could still indicate a change in societal attitudes towards the belief in divination. However, the study shows that divination is still being practiced in Zambian communities and it results in violation of individual rights when they are accused. A significant relationship was established between education levels and divination, meaning that the higher

the education level, the more they did not support the practice. Religion was also another important factor that determined people's decision to divinate. Thus, education and religion can change people's traditional beliefs hence the need to support the sectors. Though education and religion may have such association, it may not be too late for researchers to engage extensively in research on this topic to identify concepts that are worthy integrating into modern science for learning than simply condemning the practice. Thus, qualitative studies into the how of divination can help create a wealth of knowledge of how society has evolved to the current scientific level of reasoning and how some have remained sticking to primitive science. However, what should be outrightly condemned are the actions of people against those accused to be witches and wizards. The results showing that people's rights are violated after divination calls for the Human Rights Commission and other stakeholders interested in human rights to mount serious campaigns against activities that deny people their right to live and own property. Further, the police should work towards establishing posts in rural areas where most such crimes are rife. The need to provide social services such as education, health, improved standards of living and legal services to communities is key in helping communities come to terms with reality and learn to respect others' rights. Government has a responsibility to work with the church, even to fund the church to help preach against traditional beliefs that are detrimental to community security. The school curriculum can also be helpful at addressing traditional beliefs such as divination. Stopping certain traditional beliefs and practices is a gradual process because traditional beliefs become part of the lives of the growing population. Curriculum intervention can help gradually address vices that are somewhat retrogressive to society.

Chapter 21

Safer Sex and HIV Prevention Education Fatigue: Knowledge, Perceptions and Moral Behaviour among Church Youth Groups in Pietermaritzburg

Beatrice Okyere-Manu

Introduction

For almost 30 years now, various governments, institutions, religious organizations and individuals have intensively invested in human, material and economic resources in order to mitigate against the infection with and the effects of HIV.¹ This is because the disease has had devastating consequences in the whole world. Nevertheless, South Africa has made great strides since the disease was first detected in the country. South Africa's first cases of HIV were reported in 1982. A UNAIDS document reported that South Africa was the first country in sub Saharan Africa to approve pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP), and the use of antiretroviral

¹ H. Moyo, "Is Jesus HIV? Does the Body of Christ - The Church - have HIV?" In H. Moyo (ed), *Pastoral Care in a Globalized World: African and European Perspectives*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 2001; B. Okyere-Manu, "HIV Counseling and Testing (HCT) in Schools: Ethical Implications to Long Term Support Structures," *Alternations*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2016, p. 347.

drugs to protect HIV-negative people from HIV infection before potential exposure to the virus.² In addition, the country launched the National Strategic Plan 2012-2016 with the theme framed around the UNAIDS proposal of "zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths."³

Further to the formulation of the national strategic plan, there have been a number of HIV prevention programmes such as Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT), Condom use and distribution, Voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC),⁴ HIV education, and HIV awareness.

On the religious front, scholars recognized that the religious institutions have untapped assets that can potentially be used to mitigate against the effects of the disease through research and publications. The Christian church has been challenged to break the silence and respond to the disease as part of their service to humanity.⁵ On a broader perspective, most churches have been involved in care and support programmes and prevention education.

Despite all these innovative programmes to curb the disease, HIV prevalence remains high in South Africa. Although much has changed in the

² UNAIDS, 2016.

³ South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), "National Strategic Plan on HIV, STIs and TB, 2012-2016," 2011.

⁴ Though conceived and promoted as a HIV reduction strategy, Klaus Fiedler, based on evidence from Malawi, concludes that in reality VMMC increases HIV infections, as many take the message of "up to 60% increased protection" to mean that medical circumcision is the invisible condom (Klaus Fiedler, *Fake Healing Claims for HIV and AIDS in Malawi: Traditional, Christian and Scientific*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2016, pp. 36-46.

⁵ B. Okyere-Manu, *Engaging the Fertile Silence: A Culturally Sensitive Model for Dealing with the HIV and AIDS Silence*, Saarbrücken: Lambert, 2010.

past 30 years, the HIV prevalence seems to be unabated. For example, current statistics reveal that black females between the ages of 15 and 24 years continue to be the group most at risk in the population.⁶ Elsewhere, Okyere-Manu cited the 2015 mid-year population statistics that 8.5 per cent out of the 5.26 million people living with HIV are young people between the ages of 15 and 24, however the number could be higher than recorded since many youth do not know their status.⁷

Evidently, HIV has not been eradicated and a great deal of work remains. Responses to this disease therefore need to advance with the virus. It must move at the same pace and with the same enthusiastic approach. Implementing effective prevention programmes is seen as key to a successful response to the disease. However, there seems to be a safer sex and HIV prevention education fatigue among people and stagnation even of donor aid for safer sex education and HIV programmes.⁸ The Christian church continues to take a less active role with such campaigns. Yet one cannot deny the fact that in the past, safer sex campaigns have had some success in preventing HIV transmission. This chapter is not proposing that the church take leadership in the campaigns but the fact is that churches are filled with a number of young people who are sexually active. Therefore, the church cannot remain silent if such campaigns are to continue to play a vital role in our prevention efforts.

⁶ J. Chammah Kaunda, "Neo-Prophetism, Gender and 'Anointed Condoms': Towards a Mission Spiritus of Just Sex in the African Context of HIV and AIDS," *Alternation*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2016, p. 66.

⁷ B. Okyere-Manu, "HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) in Schools: Ethical Implications to Long Term Support Structures," *Alternations*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2016, p. 347.

⁸ Karen Grepin, "Efficiency Considerations of Donor Fatigue: Universal Access to Arts and Health Systems," *Sex Transm Infect*, 88, 2012.

It is with this backdrop that this chapter seeks to answer the following questions:

- What is the perception of young adults on the messages of safer sexual education and HIV education by the church, if any?
- Are young people more concerned about sexual freedom than about the consequences thereof?
- Are they comfortable with the development made in terms of Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PREP) and Post-exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) so much that they do not care about Safer Sex education and HIV programmes?
- Is safer sex fatigue having an impact on HIV Prevention?

In order to answer the above questions, the chapter draws on the findings of a qualitative study of four church young adult groups between the ages of 20 and 25 years in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa which aimed at exploring the knowledge and moral behaviour among church youth in Pietermaritzburg. The chapter therefore first theorizes the term “fatigue” in the era of HIV and AIDS; it then discusses the methodology used in data collection; and ends with a discussion of the findings and the conclusion of the study.

Theorizing Safer Sex and HIV Fatigue

After more than 30 years of safer sex education and prevention programmes in HIV and AIDS, scholars believe that there is prevention fatigue.⁹ In defining the phenomenon of fatigue around HIV issues, scholars believe that:

⁹ R.H. Gray, D. Serwadda, G. Kigozi, and F. Nalugoda, “Uganda’s HIV Prevention Success: The Role of Sexual Behavior Changes and the National Response,” *Commentary on Green E.C. and Witte, K., "Can Fear Arousal in*

HIV fatigue encompasses weariness with maintaining safer behaviour for years and or decades, frustration at having to think continually about HIV/AIDS and maintain long-term behavioural vigilance and boredom stemming from repeated exposure to health promotion messages and about HIV risk and safety.¹⁰

The above quote suggests that fatigue occurs in most cases when people become uninterested and tired with messages directed towards behavioural change. If, after months of rigorous exercises, an overweight person who initiates healthy living by daily exercises does not lose weight, then that person becomes uninterested in the exercise and eventually quits exercising. In this chapter I hypothesize that a similar phenomenon is being observed in safer sex education and HIV prevention programmes. Padamsee et al in a review of literature on the definitions of HIV fatigue held similar sentiments with scholars such as Yi, Shidlo and Standfort, Katz et al; Ostrow et al.¹¹ She proposes that the definition of HIV fatigue includes the following: Difficulties or disinterest in maintaining attention to HIV/AIDS issues. Adherence to or sustenance of behaviour modification that prevents HIV transmission or

Public Health Campaigns Contribute to the Decline of HIV Prevalence?" *Journal of Health Communications*, no. 11, 2006.

¹⁰ Tasleem J. Padamsee and Hugh Klein, "HIV Prevention Fatigue and HIV Complacency: Ongoing Challenges in Advanced Industrialized Nations," 2013, in Raymond A. Smith (ed), *Global HIV/AIDS Politics, Policy, and Activism Reference Set*, vol. 2, Westport: Praeger Publishers, pp. 271-303.

¹¹ H. Yi, A. Shidlo and T. Sandfort, "Assessing Maladaptive Responses to the Stress of Being-at-Risk of HIV Infection among HIV-Negative Gay Men in New York City," *Journal of Sex Research*, 48(1), 2011; H.M. Katz et al, "Impact of Highly Active Antiretroviral Treatment on HIV Seroincidence Among Men Who Have Sex With Men," *Am Journal of Public Health*, 92(3), San Francisco, 2002; D.E. Ostrow et al, "Attitudes towards Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy are Associated with Sexual Risk Taking among HIV-Infected and Uninfected Homosexual Men," *AIDS*, 29; 16(5), 2002.

people becoming unmotivated by safer sex messages presented by prevention programmes that come to ring hollow to them.¹² The perception of HIV fatigue seems to have worsened since the availability of Antiretroviral Drugs (ARVs), PREP and PEP.¹³

Before the advent of these drugs, safer sex education and prevention programmes were built on fear and prevention of early death with the aim of cautioning those who were sexually active or promiscuous. Writing about the ABC strategy, A. Panos argues that the ABC Strategy (abstain, be faithful, use condoms) has not been effective over the years,¹⁴ because of the unrealistic nature of the strategy, which rather increased infection and encouraged stigma and discrimination.¹⁵ With the current knowledge that death is not an immediate result of practicing unsafe sex, people's perception of death has also changed. The safer sex message and the prevention education has somehow changed as well. Instead of cautioning people to live carefully, to be faithful, to abstain, and to reduce the number of sexual partners, especially the non-regular ones, today there is the message of availability of medication.¹⁶ However, writing from the Ugandan context, Parkhurst opines that the "wide-scale

¹² Tasleem J. Padamsee and Hugh Klein, "HIV Prevention Fatigue and HIV Complacency: Ongoing Challenges in Advanced Industrialized Nations: Global HIV/AIDS Politics," in Raymond A. Smith (ed), *Policy, and Activism Reference Set*, vol. 2, Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2013, pp. 271-303.

¹³ UAC, Draft National Abstinence and Being Faithful Strategy on Prevention of Transmission, Kampala: Uganda AIDS Commission, 2006.

¹⁴ Panos, "HIV and AIDS Communication and Treatment Scale-Up: Promoting Civil Society Ownership and Integrated Approaches to Communication, Issues and Challenges Emerging from the Integrated AIDS Communication, Meeting Report," Geneva, 2004.

¹⁵ J. van Kampen, "The ABC Disaster" *The Drum Beat* (online), no. 345, 2006, www.comminit.com/drum_beat_345.html [29.5.2006].

¹⁶ Ibid.

treatment may make it no longer possible to instill fear of death from AIDS to the same extent as in previous years,"¹⁷ but rather the disease has been normalized. Nevertheless, the contention is, why threaten people for them to change their behaviour? Basil Donovan may have the answer to the above question. He is of the opinion that sex is enjoyable and a number of people do not think about the risk of HIV infection in order to change their sexual behaviour. Yet the effectiveness of prevention programmes and safer sex education can be attributed to the behavioural change among the few.¹⁸

Could it be that the availability of the medication has contributed to the weariness of safer sex messages and prevention education? To this question, the World Bank economists have responded that "the availability of antiretroviral therapy may induce both people being treated and the general population engaging in riskier sexual behaviour—a phenomenon referred to as 'disinhibition,' or 'risk compensation'".¹⁹ This is a possibility as people access the available drugs that are able to prevent them from having the disease should they be exposed.

In addition, Padamsee et al are of the view that the fatigue may also be due to the repeated safe sex messages and the risk of contracting HIV

¹⁷ J. Parkhurst, "Evidence, Politics and Uganda's HIV Success: Moving forward with ABC and HIV Prevention," *Journal of International Development*, 2010.

¹⁸ B. Donovan. "The Repertoire of Human Efforts to Avoid Sexually Transmissible Diseases, Past and Present: Part 1 Strategies Used Before or Instead of Sex," *Sex Transm Infect*, 76, 2000, pp. 7–12.

¹⁹ M. Over, Peter Heywood, Julian Gold, Indrani Gupta, Subhash Hira, Elliot Marseille, *HIV/AIDS Treatment and Prevention in India Modelling: The Cost and Consequences*, Washington DC: The World Bank, 2004.

virus over the years.²⁰ To him, the repeated message has not been helpful. A review of literature shows that the phenomenon of weariness is likely to cause a decline in condom use, especially that many men resist condoms as their preference is 'skin on skin' during sexual encounters.²¹

Methodology

Data for this study was gathered through qualitative research study using random sampling of some selected church young adult groups in Pietermaritzburg. According to Kelly, a qualitative research is "concerned with making sense of human experience from within the context and perspective of human experience."²² This method was used in generating a deeper understanding of the perceptions, knowledge and moral behaviour in the midst of HIV and AIDS years after the dawn of the disease and its devastating effects.

The study made use of structured questions to guide the four focus group discussions undertaken in January 2017, with 40 young adults between the ages of 18 to 25. The reason for choosing this age group was that they are categorized as being among the high-risk population to HIV infection in South Africa.²³ Each group consisted of 10 young adults. Participants

²⁰ J. Tasleem Padamsee and Hugh Klein, "HIV Prevention Fatigue and HIV Complacency: Ongoing Challenges in Advanced Industrialized Nations," in Raymond A. Smith (ed), *Global HIV/AIDS Politics, Policy, and Activism Reference Set*, vol. 2, Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2013, pp. 271-303.

²¹ T. Shefer, L. Clowes and T. Vergnani, "Narratives of Transactional Sex on a University Campus," *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, 14(4), 2012, pp. 435-447.

²² K. Kelly, "Lived Experience and Interpretation: The Balancing Act in Qualitative Analysis," in M. Terre Blance, K. Durrhalm and D. Painter (eds), *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for Social Science* (2nd edition), Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 2006, p. 346.

²³ "South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence and Behaviour Survey, 2012," Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council, 2014.

in the focus group were chosen through purposive sampling. The focus group discussions took place at a joint church camp in Pietermaritzburg. Since the four youth groups were in one place, it was easier to split the group on the third day of the focus group discussion into males only and females only groups. The participants were from various denominations. Their educational backgrounds varied from high school to early careers. In all, there were 28 young women and 12 young men. The diversity of the group made the study interesting and unique. There were young adults from different nationalities, cultures, racial and socio-economic background.

For confidentiality purposes, the study has not disclosed the denomination and the identity of the participants involved. The discussion was conducted in English and each discussion lasted for about an hour to an hour and a half. All the discussions were audio-recorded with permission from the participants and later transcribed thematically. Apart from demographic questions dealing with age, educational and or employment background, the following are some of the questions that guided the discussions: What is the most urgent health concern in the country? What is your current perspective on HIV and AIDS? Does the current public education/awareness as it was about 5 years ago, justify your answer? When did your church or youth group last speak about HIV in your meetings? When did you last test for HIV? What do you know about Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PREP); Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) and Antiretroviral drug?

There were follow-up questions depending on the direction as well as the dynamics of the group. The context of the group made it possible for the participants to talk openly about HIV, the group setting was safe, and it enabled meaningful engagement with the questions. A unique strategy

suggested by Strebel,²⁴ which was employed in the data collection, allowed participants to use a third person during the discussion, this ensured confidentiality and comfortability of the stories participants told. Ethical clearance for this study was obtained through Collaborative for HIV and AIDS, Religion and Theology (CHARTS) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal ethical committee.

Discussion of Findings

As mentioned above, the concern of this study is to explore the perceptions, knowledge and moral behaviour around HIV among young Christian adults in Pietermaritzburg, in the midst of PREP, PEP and Antiretroviral drugs. The analysis of the findings generated a wide range of key themes from the focus group discussions.

General Perceptions and Knowledge of the Disease

The participants unanimously mentioned that they are well informed and knowledgeable about HIV and AIDS and safer sex strategies. The following narratives are excerpts from the focus group discussion.

Most young adults of today know a lot about HIV and AIDS, during the peak of the disease, some of us were in primary and we were educated through life skills classes. During that time, HIV messages were everywhere: on the news, radio, billboards and most notice boards. There were slogans such as condomize and be wise; HIV kills. There were also soapies and movies like "Yesterday" and "Life above all."²⁵

Unless there are new findings that we were not taught, we can confidently say we know about the disease but knowing and doing are not the same. We believe that is why we are vulnerable. In the spur of the

²⁴ A. Strebel, "Focus Groups in AIDS Research," *Journal of Community and Health Sciences*, 2(2), 1995, pp. 59–69.

²⁵ Mixed group A.

moment, the knowledge acquired over the years does not translate into action. so most people overlook what they have learnt.²⁶

We strongly believe that the movement of HIV from being an acute disease to a place where there are effective medications even before one is exposed or after exposure to the disease has made people less vigilant to the disease. After all, once anyone acquires it, there is medication for one to contain the disease.²⁷

The responses above show that the young people have knowledge on HIV, are not very new. They resonate with those of most scholars in South Africa and other African countries such as Peltzer,²⁸ Ntata et al,²⁹ and Cloete et al.³⁰ Even though the target groups of these scholars were University students, their findings on the knowledge and perception of the disease were similar to the current target groups. Nevertheless, from the narratives, it is clear that knowing and doing are two separate things. Most young people are aware of the effect of the disease; they have seen individuals and some family members struggling with its effects yet such knowledge does not necessarily translate to actions.

²⁶ Mixed group D.

²⁷ Mixed group A.

²⁸ K. Peltzer, "Sexuality of Black South African University Students in the Context of HIV/AIDS," *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 15(1), 2005, pp. 17–24.

²⁹ P. Ntata, A. Muula, S. Siziya and E. Kayambazinthu, "Gender Differences in University Students' HIV/AIDS-Related Knowledge and Sexual Behaviours in Malawi: A Pilot Study," *Journal of Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS*, 5(4), 2008, pp. 201–205.

³⁰ A. Cloete et al, "Challenges Faced by People Living with HIV/AIDS in Cape Town, South Africa: Issues for Group Risk Reduction Interventions," *AIDS Research and Treatment*, Article ID 420270, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2010/420270>.

On the issue of condoms use, the groups had a lot to say. They reported of the complexity of using condoms consistently. Most young people do not use condoms consistently because in most heterosexual relationships, the male partners prefer to use condoms during the first encounter but not subsequent ones. For fear of losing their lovers, the girls give in to their demands. It came out clearly that the fact that they go to church does not prevent them from being sexually active.

People know that they are supposed to use condoms for each encounter but it is easier to ignore. Now we cannot say we do not have condoms, they are everywhere particularly in most public toilets, higher institutions of education, but people hardly use condoms continuously. The biggest challenge is when people are intoxicated, they lose their sense of control that is where the carelessness sets in.³¹

As young Christians we also get tempted to have sex and at times some young people find it hard to say no, because the pressure of the temptation is too big. It is in trying to hide from being seen or discovered that someone is sleeping with their boyfriend or girlfriend that young people become too secretive and fear to be seen accessing condoms. How does one go to buy condoms or pick condoms in a public toilet in such a situation where they want to hide at all times? "So even when some young people have heard the messages of safe sex, they choose to be too careful from being seen as breaking church rules, but choose to break safe sex messages." It will be a big problem especially if you are a female, because the next day the whole church will hear about it as a result.³²

The issue of knowing and doing came out strongly in all the four groups as a neglected individual responsibility. The inconsistency in the use of condoms was noted in the discussions; this was regardless of the general knowledge of the disease. Another major issue that came out of the discussions was the embarrassment of adult church members seeing them

³¹ Mixed Group C.

³² Mixed Group B.

purchasing condoms, due to the teaching of abstinence that the church preaches. As a result, young people stated that they shun from using condoms. The female participants expressed their disappointment in their male counterparts wanting sex without the use of condoms and their failure to negotiate the condom use. This is because refusal may mean the end of the relationship.

HIV education by the church

The participants expressed their perceptions and concerns with the safer sex messages by the church and they also suggested what they think the church should do. They observed that the teaching on abstinence is superficial and not helpful. Their perceptions were that the messages by the church on safer sex does not speak into the realities of young people as they face daily pressures of making sexual decisions at most times.

One biggest challenge is that we do not remember the last time we had educational training in HIV in our church. I am sure the church leaders are as tired as we are. They do not give us any alternatives; they say masturbation is a sin yet safer sex education outside the church encourages “do it yourself,” so we get mixed messages and it is confusing; so you do what is best for you.³³

It is not easy to abstain; there is sex all around us on the internet, our phones, TV and one can get this even in their bedroom. In movies, lovers enjoy sex with energy and passion but the Christian church says don’t do it, suppress your passion, how do you do that?³⁴

The church’s teaching and young people’s realities are apart. The church preaches abstinence yet the reality is that at this stage in our lives it is difficult both in school and in the workplace.

³³ Mixed group C.

³⁴ Mixed group D.

The government and some NGOs give alternatives, for example they will say if you are not able to abstain then use condoms, or “do it yourself.” They encourage masturbation. If per chance you don’t use condoms, there are alternatives such as PREP or PEP, but the church is stuck on only one option, that is, to abstain. Therefore, what happens if one is not able to abstain? What happens when our hormones kick in? We hear many conflicting messages, particularly from the church. The church’s message is too rigid; we need educational programmes that give hope and alternatives, messages that are uplifting. Take for instance the message from social workers or the government. They tell you that there is medication available should one slip. This is not so for the church. Even in the traditional South African culture they used to allow them to practice ‘usoma’ (non-penetrative or thigh sex), so why can’t the church give us alternatives. Times have changed and they also need to change.³⁵

The dichotomy between the church’s teaching and the realities in terms of the sexual experiences of the individuals in the focus groups was highlighted as a major concern. Whereas the government messages give tools and alternatives, the church’s messages are strict and difficult to adhere to, according to the group. Some of the tools and alternatives by government agencies include condoms, masturbation, PREP, PEP as well as ARVs. The young people were of the opinion that there is need for the church to relook at its HIV education because the current one is narrow and does not touch their realities.

HIV Fatigue

The focus group discussions among the church young adults revealed an undisputed sense of information overload and fatigue around HIV educational programmes.

³⁵ Mixed group B.

Young people are tired of hearing about HIV. We have been bombarded with a lot of information on the dos and don'ts of the disease so much so that now we do not even want to hear about it anymore.³⁶

Eish, since primary school we have been hearing about HIV up until Varsity. It is ok now; we need information about new things because as you are aware HIV has moved from an acute disease to a manageable one. There is medication to help one manage it so well. We need to hear about new discoveries not death and definitely not the scare of having sex.³⁷

For how long can we maintain safe sex behaviour as per the teaching of the church, we think it is time the church came on board with the condom issue. People are having sex, so the church needs to stop advocating for abstinence and teach us ways to protect ourselves. There is even medication but our churches are quiet about them, what do we do when we are challenged by our hormones. I don't think one can go around in fear about HIV; what we need from the church is a more flexible strategy in safer sex education and prevention programmes.³⁸

In South Africa, people are tired of hearing about HIV and AIDS because pictures and stories shared during training sessions mostly focus on the socially marginalized, creating the impression that HIV is a Black people's disease. One hardly hears people from other racial groups who are positive except on TV adverts and one does not know whether it is a mockery or not.³⁹

What we see in our communities is that people, particularly young people, are too comfortable and too familiar with HIV. They say that they have heard it all and the fact is that all of us will die whether one is HIV positive or not. We are thankful that there is medication.⁴⁰

³⁶ Mixed groups A, B, C, D.

³⁷ Mixed group A.

³⁸ Male group.

³⁹ Male group.

⁴⁰ Female group.

Some of the above responses are similar to the ones described by studies conducted in South Africa with University students.⁴¹ The participants in these studies also noted that there seems to be information overload around the disease and they were weary of maintaining safer sex for years as per the teaching of the church. Mitchell et al confirm this point that indeed there is an internalized AIDS fatigue on the part of those most affected by the epidemic.⁴² Another important point that came out of the discussions is that most young people are sexually active, as such they need the necessary skills and tools to enable them to negotiate sex. An interesting point that came out as one of the reasons for the fatigue was the perception that HIV is a disease that attacks only black people in South Africa. This is in contrast to their sentiments that they are well informed about issues around HIV and AIDS.

Moral Challenges to the Church

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that indeed there is safer sex education and prevention fatigue among young adults in the Christian church in Pietermaritzburg. One major reason given for this situation is the different messages from the church and those from secular organizations. The content of the church's education is inconsistent with the realities of the participants, calling the church's moral responsibility to the young people into question. It was evident that the churches' message of strict abstinence is not helpful and a more practical tool that will inform their realities is preferred.

⁴¹ C. Holmes, "The Silence Around Them: AIDS NGOs, Scaling Up and AIDS Fatigue in University Students," *Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection*, 2005, p. 403, https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/403

⁴² C. Mitchell and A. Smith, "Changing the Picture: Youth Gender and HIV/AIDS-Prevention Campaigns in South Africa," *Canadian Woman, Studies/Les Cahiers de la Femme 1*, 2001, p. 60.

One of participants in the female group shared a story that took place in their church. The leader of the young adult group became pregnant out of wedlock and the whole church was disappointed. Everyone in the church was pointing fingers at her and she was asked to step down from leadership, yet no one from the church had taken the time to investigate her realities or offer alternative tools when it comes to negotiation of sex. She was asked to apologize in front of the entire congregation and because she could not bear the embarrassment, she left the church.⁴³ A critical look at the story raises a number of critical ethical questions for the church, and these include: what is the moral responsibility of the church to young people in the congregation? Why should the youth leader apologize in front of the whole church? Why were the members of the congregation disappointed? Was the church aware of the socio-economic background of the leader? What about the daily sexual challenges she was experiencing? What input did the church offer to the leader whilst she was a member of the church and even when she left?

The above story typifies the effect of the narrowness in the safer sex and prevention messages of the church's teaching to young adults. Of course, people did not know the status of the girl. What is clear is that she could not abstain; and this is the reality of many young people in the church today. The challenge therefore is: what is the church doing? Is it not time to revisit the abstinence message? Safer sex and prevention programmes fatigue is real and in the midst of information overload coming from the church, secular organizations and social media, one is left vulnerable. A number of factors may have resulted in the pregnancy. Apart from not using any protection, Beverly Haddad draws attention to the fact that "contemporary sexual practices in KwaZulu-Natal are shaped as much

⁴³ Female group.

by culture as by the socio-economic context of poverty.”⁴⁴ Haddad’s observation exposes the contexts the participants come from and such knowledge must inform the church of its responsibility towards the youth. In addition, the girl may have been raped since sexual violence is rampant in South Africa and Jewkes et al have confirmed that a third of adolescents may have had a forced sexual encounter.⁴⁵ The typical Christian Church is quick to discipline instead of offering safer sex and prevention education. The group reacted in anger upon hearing the story about the response of the church. They agreed that it was best for the leader to leave the church. They also felt justice was not done because the church failed in terms of its responsibility to the youth leader, yet it was quick to point a finger at her.

Elsewhere I have argued that the consequences of HIV should challenge the church to “embrace strategies aimed at opening up communication lines in order to protect our current and future generations.”⁴⁶

Conclusion

The chapter has reinforced the perception that there is a sense of fatigue around safer sex education and HIV prevention programmes among young adults in the Christian churches in Pietermaritzburg. The findings highlight the fact that there is inconsistency between the church’s education and that of the secular organizations. Whereas the church teaches

⁴⁴ B. Haddad, "Poverty, Gendered Cultural Sexual Practices and HIV: Ethical Implications," *Journal of Constructive Theology*, 15(2), 2009, p. 10.

⁴⁵ R. Jewkes, C. Vundule, F. Maforah and E. Jordaan, "Relationship Dynamics and Adolescent Pregnancy in South Africa," *Social Science and Medicine*, 5, 2001, p. 733.

⁴⁶ B. Okyere-Manu, "HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) in Schools: Ethical Implications to Long Term Support Structures," *Alternations*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2016, p. 354.

abstinence, the secular organizations offer alternatives in the form of tools and skills needed by contemporary young people to negotiate sexual encounters. It came out that the churches' standpoint in terms of safer sex and prevention education does not respond to the daily realities young people face. It is evident that the participants are sexually active and the church's message renders them vulnerable to HIV infection. The findings suggest that the youth are tired of information overload around issues of sexuality and sexual health. Given their fatigue, the chapter challenges the church to find new ways of responding to the daily realities of young people in the church in terms of safer sex and the prevention programmes it delivers.

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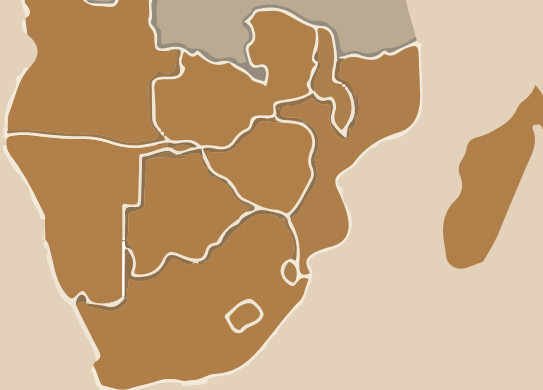
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Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the former President of Tanzania, once said that the purpose of development should be to lift up the life of human beings created in the image and likeness of God. The varied chapters in this book show that the principal component of development and its major objective should be to develop people in all walks of life without discrimination. It should have a positive impact on the poor and the rich, the literate and illiterate, urban and rural, men and women, young and old, citizens as much as migrant labourers across the religious spectrum. This is the only way in which development can bring prosperity for all and not for the privileged few. In this regard, religion should play a crucial role in development in order to enhance the dignity, freedom, honour and wholeness of the people of God. We strongly commend this book to all involved in the development of the peoples of Southern and Central Africa.

Professor James N. Amanze, Gaborone
(ATISCA SECRETARIAT)



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